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In Austria. A progressive legal code made it a criminal offence, but the inherited social code made duelling mandatory. And the courts of honour of the officer corps operated in open defiance of the law. From an early stage Schnitzler satirizes this archaic code. But at the same time he succumbs to the fascination exerted by the duel, and time and again his writings exploit the thrill of violent premature death. In Schnitzler's fictional world the mortality rate runs high. Thus death by duelling forms the climax of what Reinhard Urbach claims to be Schnitzler's masterpiece, *Das weiße Land* (now translated by Tom Stoppard under the title *Undiscovered Country*). But this traditional *coup-de-théâtre* undermines the rigour of his modern comedy of manners.

These same strengths and limitations are evident in Schnitzler's diaries. So far only a single volume, *Tagebuch 1909-1912*, has been published, but they cover the whole period from 1879 until his death in 1931, fifty-two of the most momentous years of Austrian history. In accordance with his wishes, the diary is to be published complete and unaltered, and this immense task is being undertaken by a team of researchers led by Werner Welzig, under the auspices of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. The enormous bulk of the entries made by Schnitzler almost daily in a hand hard to decipher, abounding in cryptic abbreviations and obscure proper names, must make this one of the most formidable editorial tasks ever tackled.

Technically, this first volume is an impressive achievement. An introduction by Professor Welzig establishes the scope and nature of the project. Even the most inconsequential details in the diary are clearly and faithfully reproduced. And meticulously compiled indexes identify references to over a thousand named individuals, as well as to Schnitzler's own writings.

The historical importance of the diaries is unquestionable. They form a kind of *Who's Who* of cultural life in Vienna. For Schnitzler was not a writer who worked in isolation. He was a convivial man whose ideas were filtered through a complex cultural environment. He would dictate his work to his secretary, read the first draft out loud to his wife or to a small circle of friends, and then revise his work in the light of their comments. He was constantly comparing notes with other authors (like Beer-Hofmann or Wassermann) or with editors who might publish his work (like Moritz Benedikt of the *Neue Freie Presse*). His plays were then submitted to theatre directors, read by members of the cast, revised, submitted to the censor, revised again, and then subjected to final cuts and revisions. The diaries enable us to follow this process in fascinating detail.

They also document Schnitzler's assimilation of intellectual stimuli from other writers. He was a compulsive reader, noting down almost everything he read. His preoccupation with psychoanalysis can be traced in particular details. He read the *Interpretation of Dreams* in 1900, shortly after it was published, and was in personal contact with members of Freud's circle. Through his wife he was also involved with the Viennese musical scene, so that Mahler and Bruno Walter figure prominently in his diaries. The sphere of literary journalism is also vividly documented from the inside. Schnitzler was on personal terms with many of the leading journalists, actors and theatre directors of the day, but at times his comments on their professional conduct and moral character are quite devastating. The diaries thus offer private confirmations of the astute judgments which Karl Kraus was passing in public in the satirical pages of *Die Fackel*; and they provide a mine of information for the cultural historian.

Their literary status, however, is more doubtful. On the evidence of this first volume they are unlikely to rank high among writings in diary form. The diary consists essentially of jottings, recording the disconnected events of Schnitzler's daily routine. There is little attempt at sustained argument or elegance of style. And there is none of that intellectual excitement generated by

the diaries of (say) Thomas Mann or Robert Musil. It might of course be argued that the diarist is a writer off duty who need satisfy no one but himself. But the standards which a writer sets for himself are nevertheless revealing, and Schnitzler is on record as saying that he believed his diaries would rank with the greatest achievements of any author. After quoting this claim, Welzig goes on to argue that the diary should be read not as a document, but as the organization of experience in verbal form. But the verbal texture is generally so thin that its fundamental significance must be sought elsewhere. It seems to lie in Schnitzler's preoccupation with the dimension of time.

Schnitzler's writings are haunted by evanescence. The worst immortality (as he defines it in a diary note of July 1913) is the future to grasp and enjoy the given moment of time (den Augenblick geniessen). The painstaking attempt to record how he spent every morning, every afternoon, every evening of his adult life emerges as an attempt to fortify the self against transience and oblivion. It is an exercise in self-confirmation. But what is being confirmed in the diaries of 1909-12 is not intensity of the emotional life. Apart from references to talking through the stresses of his marriage, there is little sense of accumulated emotional experience. The diaries live only in the present. But they try to fill that present with a sense of the redeeming function of his tireless labours as a writer. Schnitzler insistently emphasizes his meticulous literary craftsmanship, his repeated revisions, his concern to add "the final polish". He fits into the pattern which Roland Barthes identified of the postmodernist author for whom the activity of writing becomes existentially self-validating. But the impression left by these diaries is one of self-consolation, rather than self-confirmation. The repeated suggestion is that although he may not have achieved what he wished, he could not possibly have worked not it harder.

This is linked with Schnitzler's remarkably acute powers of self-assessment. He knew that his writings were good, but he also knew that they were never as good as he intended. He recognized that he would never be an author of the first rank, and his reflections on this problem constitute one of the most intriguing dimensions of the diary. He was acutely sensitive to the fact that critics who praised his work tended to rely on an all too predictable repertoire of clichés, his reflections on the ironies of fame are particularly revealing at the time of his fiftieth birthday. Productions of his plays are being staged to about a hundred different theatres throughout the German-speaking world. He receives nearly five hundred congratulatory letters and telegrams. But he cannot quite suppress the thought that the solitary dissenting voice (that of Kraus in *Die Fackel*) may come closer to the truth than all this adulation.

The cool and sceptical voice of the diarist thus lies certain attractions. But the major deficiency lies in the failure to sustain arguments and carry them through to their ultimate conclusions. What is revealed here is not only Schnitzler's limitations as a diarist, but also the half-heartedness of his liberalism. There is a lack of intellectual rigour in his willingness to see both sides of almost any question. His documents, published by Friedläng in 1908 to justify war against Serbia, were admittedly forgeries. But this should not lead one to doubt Friedläng's integrity. The journalist Felix Salten is unquestionably a scoundrel. But when one looks about it he's really quite a good chap after all. The theatre director Berger is strikingly disreputable bargains with the clerical fiction editor, but one has to know Schnitzler well enough to know he is not a scoundrel. One's plays performed.

The inadequacy of this position is particularly evident in Schnitzler's attitude to politics. In the period 1909-12, the years of his greatest fame, Austria was drifting towards disintegration. The shadow of the authoritarian Franz Ferdinand falls heavily across these pages. Passing references to the prospect of war become increasingly frequent. In Schnitzler's notes, as in his



Arthur Schnitzler on the Adriatic coast during a Mediterranean holiday in March, 1905, from Arthur Schnitzler: *Sein Leben - Sein Werk - Seine Zeit*.

published writings, politics are firmly defined as a matter of marginal importance. He emphatically refuses to write an article about his political opinions for the *Neue Freie Presse*. "Politics destroys the character," we are repeatedly assured. But at times the inadequacy of this response is perceived by the diarist himself, for everywhere politics come creeping back, in a displaced form. Antisemitic cycling-clubs are merely the extreme instance of a pervasive phenomenon. The theatre itself is a battleground between contending factions. The Czechs are extending their influence in one area, the Cler-

icals in another. The press is in the hands of propagandists. And everywhere there is the creeping sickness of antisemitism. All of this is clearly glimpsed and conscientiously recorded. Schnitzler is particularly scathing on Jews who deny their own ethnic identity and take refuge in an exaggerated German patriotism or Christian piety. But although he notes the danger signals, he never reaches any critical conclusions. The situation is desperate, but not serious (to quote the characteristic Austrian adage). And the scepticism of his diaries is ultimately as evasive as that of his pub-

lished writings. Thus antisemitism for Schnitzler is essentially a psychological problem - "die ungeschriebene, im seelischen liegende Problem der Juden" (September 24, 1910). And he complains that no reader of his novel *Der Weg ins Freie* has yet been able to respond to his treatment of the Jewish question "rein künstlerisch" - in purely artistic terms.

Schnitzler's achievement lies with the limits of the aestheticism so characteristic of the Habsburg liberal intelligentsia. His writings combine the portents of a brave new world with epitaphs for a vanished age.

Tending to the literal

By R. J. Hollingdale

MICHAEL HAMBURGER (Translator)
An Unofficial Rilke
Poems 1912-1926
118pp. Anvil Press. £3.95.
0 8546 077 X

Dryden distinguished three kinds of verse translation, and called them metaphrase, paraphrase and imitation. Metaphrase is "word by word, and line by line" translation, and Dryden rejected it, as he did imitation, in favour of paraphrase, which he defined as "translation with latitude, where the author is kept in view by the translator, so as never to be lost, but his words are not so strictly followed as his sense".

This looks like, and is, a sound English compromise; yet, like all sound compromises and middle ways, it is an enemy, not only of what is worse, but also of what is better, namely the ideal. Now it seems obvious that an ideal verse translation is a metaphrase of its original, and that Dryden rejected metaphrase because he thought it unachievable. Metaphrases which fall as poetry are likely to be valueless altogether, but that fact ought to confirm - on the "lilies that the stars shall smother" than "weeds" principle - that the successful metaphrase would be the ideal.

In any event, perfect metaphrase is what Michael Hamburger strives after. He has never so far as I know, acknowledged it in plain words, but what he has said about his procedure, and his translations themselves, leave little room for doubt. In the 1964 preface to his Hölderlin translations, after firmly rejecting imitation as having "become a kind of occupational therapy for poets past or temporarily disabled," he says he has "tried to get under his original poet's skin. Though I will often adapt a passage where I feel that a

literal rendering would create an effect different from that intended by the poet... my overall purpose is to reproduce even those peculiarities of his diction, form and way of thinking and feeling which are alien both to myself and to English conventions. Why assumption is that the reader who cannot cope with the original text does not want my personal response to it as much as he wants to get as close as possible to the text itself.

What this endeavour leads to in practice is a serious attempt at successful "word by word, and line by line" translation. Here is a very brief illustration and a comparison with the practice of a differently minded translator, David Gascoyne: first Gascoyne, then Hölderlin, then Hamburger:

When I heard
That Patmos was among the nearest
I longed to disembark
And to approach its gloomy caves.

Und da ich hörte
Dass nahgelegene eine
Sei Patmos
Verlangte mich sehr
Dort anzukommen und dort
Der dunklen Grotte zu oase.

And when I heard
That of the near islands one
Was Patmos,
I greatly desired
There to be lodged, and there
To approach the dark grotto.

In this instance, not only is Mr. Hamburger much closer to Hölderlin's original shape and rhythm, his decision to imitate the form has also given him scope to render the meaning of some of the individual words more precisely. It is, I think, a victory for metaphrase.

Hamburger was awarded last year's Schlegel Prize for his translations of Paul Celan; now we have his versions of forty-three poems of Rilke, and again we have a

demonstration of how successful and satisfactory an all-but-literal rendition of a poem can be. Another illustration will make the point first J. B. Leishman, then Rilke, then Hamburger:

Women, that you should be moving
among us,
here, among us, sadly
not more sheltered than we, and
able to bless like the blessed!

Oh, dass ihr hier, Frauen,
elzhergeht,
hier unter uns, leidvoll,
nicht geschönter als wir und dennoch
inständig
selig zu machen wie Selige.

Oh, that you walk about, women,
here in our midst, suffering,
not more spared than we are, yet
able
to grant bliss like the blessed.

The differences between the two versions are not great: but where they do differ, I think the latter is an improvement, being both better poetry and closer to the original.

The small number of rhyming poems in this selection presents, of course, a different problem, and it is one that is sometimes "solved" by ignoring the rhymes: yet in every case the degree of "paraphrase" of the original is minimal.

Eloë Furché in meinem Halm,
eine Lilie melior Hand:
bist die Gewohnheit stand,
wird sie mir beides verwirren.

A furrow in my bialo,
a line on my hand:
thou habit prevails again
both: it will blur, confound.

The book's title means only that the poems included were either not published or not published in collection during Rilke's lifetime: the slight suggestion that they are also very little known is plainly unintended. Since "Handliners" and "Ausgesetzte auf den Bergen der Herzens" are among them.

Cudgelling and cogitating

By Paul Johnson

IAN HAMILTON:

Koestler
398pp. Secker and Warburg. £12.
0 436 19101 6

This biographical study has had a difficult gestation and, like any such work written during the subject's lifetime, it has shortcomings. But to anyone who cares about the battle of ideas in the twentieth century it is fascinating. How could it not be? Arthur Koestler is the archetypal intellectual of the totalitarian age, an age when intellectuals lived dangerously. He served in all its campaigns, suffered in its jails, wears its battle-honours, collected an honourable scar or two. The amazing thing is that he survived at all, to live into serene old age, having produced a body of work formidable by any standards. Ian Hamilton's narrative records how many of Koestler's colleagues fell victim to the tyrannies they served or fought.

It is important to the Koestler story that he was born not only a Jew but a Hungarian Jew, for Hungary, more than Germany, more even than Austria, was the great loser at Versailles: Hungarian Jews of the interwar period were involved in a double diaspora. Koestler began as a Zionist; went to Palestine, hated it; served the liberal-Jewish Ulstein newspaper group first as a Middle East correspondent, then in Paris, then in Berlin as a science editor. He joined the Communist Party as an agent, was sacked when his activities were revealed, went to Russia (in Stalin's great famine), returned to Paris to work in Muenzenberg's factory, then to Spain, where the fascists twice had the opportunity to murder him. He broke with the party at precisely the moment that Stalin's assassins were roaming the world looking for such defectors. In 1940 he allowed himself to be overtaken by the German invasion in France - carelessly for a man with his record - and was forced to join the Foreign Legion to escape. By the time he got to wartime Britain he was gruesomely familiar with the inside of camps, jails and execution-sheds all over Europe and had already written his masterpiece, *Darkness at Noon*. He knew the grey terror of Continental bureaucracy down to its last rubber stamp, and there is something comic in this angry survivor shouting at the bewildered British officials: "I demand to be interrogated."

As an ex-communist Koestler continued to take risks. In the 1940s and 1950s no other individual was more effective, both through his writings and organizational activities, in alerting the West to the horrors and dangers of Stalinism. For many years he was a favourite hate-figure of Moscow and, while he lived in France, of the corrupt and violent French CP. *L'Humanité* published a large-scale map of the region where Koestler lived with an arrow pointing to his house. "This is the headquarters of the Cold War," this was the headline. The American Ambassador, trains his para-military

"Joe could bargain the buttons off your trousers", a National Coal Board official once observed, apparently with enthusiasm. Certainly Joe Gormley has always been a sharp fellow. As the fourth of seven children born to a mining family in Ashton-under-Lyne, he was, he tells us, "born to a negotiating position". From then on, things generally went pretty well. As a youth, he was lucky in fights, lucky with girls he met while "sparkling" in the local hayfields, lucky (at least sometimes) in his compulsive gambling on horses. Fortune was generally on his side during a rapid ascent in the stormy world of the National Union of Mineworkers. A rare failure would invariably be turned to good advantage. An unsuccessful attempt to emigrate to Australia in 1953 saw him migrate to Staffordshire instead, with rapid promotion on to the miners' national executive as a result. Disappointed in early political ambitions (he was turned down for nomination as Labour candidate for Burnley owing to his anti-CND views), he soon followed Sam Watson on to the Labour Party NEC. Defeated by Lawrence Daly for the union secretariatship in 1966, he bounced back to trounce his opponents in winning the presidency three years later. Thereafter, whether in industrial confrontation or (more characteristically) in deft diplomacy over beer and sandwiches, things have usually gone his way.

The author provides a good deal of clearly marshalled information on many topics. For enthusiasts for mining techniques, there is a fascinating account of the methods of "drift-digging" and the precise role of "sylvesters" and "gablocks" in the heaving of coal. On collective bargaining, the course of negotiations with the NCB and the Heath government prior to the national coal strikes of February 1972 and February 1974 is discussed in valuable detail. The background to the Wilberforce court of inquiry in 1972 is filled out in major respects. In 1974 we learn how potentially successful talks between Gormley and Whitelaw were blighted by interference from Labour Party leaders - which leads Gormley to join the throng in driving a few more nails

into the coffin of Sir Harold Wilson's reputation. The progress of the national incentive scheme for productivity in the mid-1970s is also illuminated. The book ends with a demolition job on Arthur Scargill. This, then, is not only a superior form of "ghosted" biography. It is also one of the best accounts of a miners' leader yet to appear, comparable with the autobiographies of Arthur Horner or Will Painter in the recent past. It will be warmly welcomed by historians as well as the general reader concerned with recent industrial controversies.

The moulding of Gormley's personality and outlook is a major revelation of this book. From the start, he emerges as a pugnacious "moderate" - a natural diplomat with a good dig in either fist. The early pages describing the mining community at Ashton are moving and instructive. Out of that timeless working-class world of struggle and poverty, little removed from Mrs Gaskell, with its daily brutalities and appalling pit fatalities, Gormley arose with rare talents and ambition. Andy Capp and Archie Rice rolled into one. A generation earlier, in the era of the private coalowners, he might have been lost to view. In the more hopeful world of the Attlee government and of nationalization after 1947, new opportunities could open up for a thrifty young area secretary. Thereafter, Gormley's approach is always expansive and optimistic. He fights tenaciously against pit closures and the Roberts era. But for the miners left in the industry, he strikes out confidently. He is not averse to economic benefits. With the Heath government beaten after the Wilberforce findings in 1972, Gormley is as forceful as his Communist colleagues in piling a further twenty fringe benefits on to the basic wage award, including the ending of the hated bonus shift, a source of contention for the miners since 1947. The 1974 strike ends with equal flourish, the NUM being given a blank cheque by Michael Foot. In passing, Gormley murmurs that these strikes may have had undesirable long-term results in teaching "the lads" to talk precipitately of strike action in any labour dispute. But such worries do not detain him for long. The president of the NUM in the seventies is a cheerful hedonist enjoying the good life in Sunbury-on-Thames, honoured by the media (for all his occasional carping about press treatment of his convivial life-style), and revered by most of his flock.

In general this is an invigorating, even inspiring, account of an important life. Gormley emerges as more than a visionary than has often been detected. He has a warm commitment to persuade industrial co-ordination and to an idealism of an unusually internationalist flavour. Tony Benn's offer to him of the chairmanship of the NCB in 1976 was an appropriate recognition of his qualities. Like other union leaders, Gormley has his limitations and blind spots. In some ways, the effect of his career has been to reinforce the class system within our society, rather than to erode it, for all the material gains won by the miners since 1972. But it has been a creative and effective presidency by an outstanding working-class figure, nevertheless.

people - all the anti-Soviet forces choose their heroes well", and the CP press foamed at the mouth when he was only fined. "Just imagine what would have happened to an ordinary peace-fighter!" Paris seems to have brought out the excitable side of Koestler's intellectualism. Simone de Beauvoir, whose novel *Les Mandarins* supposedly portrayed an affair with Koestler, recorded one night out in her memoirs:

... he returned to the theme of "No friendship without political agreement". ... Suddenly Koestler threw a glass at Sartre's head and it smashed against the wall on ... Sartre was staggering about on the street and laughing helplessly when Koestler finally decided to climb back up the stairs, way on all fours. He wanted to continue his quarrel with Sartre. "Come on let's go home," said Camus, laying a friendly hand on his shoulder. Koestler shrugged the hand off and hit Camus, who then tried to hurl himself on his aggressor. ...

Were such episodes important? Probably not. They tended to occur when Koestler's work was going badly, or when he was publicizing rather than writing his books. The fact is that, throughout these fevered post-war years he produced a great deal of high-quality writing which itself demanded a prodigious amount of reading. His violence and what, to

judge from Maimaine's letters, was an adamant egotism, were balanced by a power of attraction which led her to write:

I am awfully happy with K simply because I do love him so much ... I shall consider my life has been well spent since I spent six years of it with K ... I greatly believe in K as a writer, and I would do anything, even leave him, if it were necessary to help him to fulfil what I believe to be his destiny.

The reader of Hamilton's account is bound to ask whether the importance of the work merited such devotion. Intellectuals tend to be selfish and demanding because the essence of an intellectual is that he gives ideas a higher priority than people. In this sense Koestler is the quintessential intellectual. He once described his life as stumbling "along his zig-zag path, pulled in opposite directions by political fanaticism and contemplative detachment". It is true that his earlier scientific interests yielded to communism, then anti-totalitarianism, then in the 1950s came back to science again, and in recent years to the paranormal. But in a sense it is all the same pursuit of ideas, for their own sake as well as for their impact on humanity. What attracted Koestler to communism was that he believed it was a "scientific" system; he dropped it when he found that, beneath its modernistic

vener, it was just an old-fashioned affair of lies and thuggery. The freedom he then embraced could not be made into a scientific system but it was linked to science in that it made possible unrestricted enquiry, something Marxist "science" could not permit. Koestler came to see that the solution to the human predicament (he claimed he was a short-term pessimist, a long-term optimist) lay in the scientific imagination, which for him replaced politicians' utopianism as man's best hope and which he made his chief object of study. So his life is chief more of a piece than it seems at first glance and - certainly as Hamilton presents it - has revolved round concepts rather than people. There is, however, one important exception to this proposition: Koestler's intense, protracted and ultimately highly successful campaign against capital punishment, which Hamilton describes well and in detail and which was essentially prompted not by intellectual notions but by the actual observation in jail of people who knew or feared they were going to be executed.

Koestler's anti-hanging campaigning is a key to his spirit: it is impossible to imagine Sartre, for instance, devoting such a large part of his life and energies to such a "peripheral" cause. The great thing about Koestler is that he is a loner; he has never hunted with an intellectual pack.

That has been his moral salvation. For intellectual collectives are ultra-conformist and members of them are able to edge each other imperceptibly into the most monstrous denials of truth and humanity. Koestler's acrimoniousness, to which Maimaine's letters bear eloquent witness and which reflected his absolute determination to think everything out for himself, alone, kept him from the collective heartlessness of, say, the Left Book Club circle or *Les Temps Modernes*. Koestler has to be ranked with Orwell and Camus: a trio of outstanding intellectual non-conformists who were never dragged by crows into moral obloquy. Perhaps one should make it a quartet, since Bertrand Russell also proved too big and singular for Bloomsbury, just as Orwell rejected Gollancz's yellow-backed battalions and Camus the Sartre gang. All of these men proved that intellectual meffes can be successfully defied, albeit at the cost of much suffering. Of their writings, *Darkness at Noon* probably had the most impact in its day. It may be that Koestler has never since produced anything quite to equal it. But the quality of his work has remained consistently high: no reasonable man can read even the slightest of his essays without acquiring new knowledge and fresh thoughts. Hamilton's book presents a vivid serial of this gifted man cudgelling and cogitating his way through the decades.

Up from the pit-face

By Kenneth O. Morgan

JOE GORMLEY:
Battered Cherub
216pp. Hamish Hamilton. £7.95.
0 241 10754 7

"Joe could bargain the buttons off your trousers", a National Coal Board official once observed, apparently with enthusiasm. Certainly Joe Gormley has always been a sharp fellow. As the fourth of seven children born to a mining family in Ashton-under-Lyne, he was, he tells us, "born to a negotiating position". From then on, things generally went pretty well. As a youth, he was lucky in fights, lucky with girls he met while "sparkling" in the local hayfields, lucky (at least sometimes) in his compulsive gambling on horses. Fortune was generally on his side during a rapid ascent in the stormy world of the National Union of Mineworkers. A rare failure would invariably be turned to good advantage. An unsuccessful attempt to emigrate to Australia in 1953 saw him migrate to Staffordshire instead, with rapid promotion on to the miners' national executive as a result. Disappointed in early political ambitions (he was turned down for nomination as Labour candidate for Burnley owing to his anti-CND views), he soon followed Sam Watson on to the Labour Party NEC. Defeated by Lawrence Daly for the union secretariatship in 1966, he bounced back to trounce his opponents in winning the presidency three years later. Thereafter, whether in industrial confrontation or (more characteristically) in deft diplomacy over beer and sandwiches, things have usually gone his way.

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His dog and himself

By Victoria Glendinning

FRANCIS KING (Editor):
My Sister and Myself
The Diaries of J. R. Ackerley
217pp. Hutchinson. £8.95.
0 09 147020 X

J. R. Ackerley, born 1896, was author, dog-lover, boy-lover, poet, literary talent-spotter, editor, diarist — not necessarily in that order. He died in 1967. Although his friends, prominent among whom was E. M. Forster, were devoted to him, he seems to lack the universality or the glamour necessary to win him much more than specialists' attention in a generation that neither knew him nor felt his influence as literary editor of the *Lit* or a post he held for nearly a quarter of a century. Yet most of his books were unimpeachably autobiographical, and the astonishing story of how his father kept up, in perfect secrecy, two separate marriages only a few miles apart, was revealed not only by him in *My Father and Myself* but by his half-sister Diana Petre in *The Secret Orchard of Roger Ackerley*. Now, with the publication of these diaries covering the years between 1948 and 1958, Joe Ackerley must be becoming one of the best-documented figures of his generation.

His Alsatian bitch, Queenie, must be the best-documented dog in literature. Ackerley wrote about her in two books, as "Tulip" and as "Evie", and it is she who is the real heroine of *My Sister and Myself*, not poor Nancy. Ackerley loved Queenie more than he loved any human. "All Joe's friends, even those who were dog-lovers like myself, hated Queenie," writes Francis King in his introduction.

Well, not quite all his friends. On November 1, 1948, Ackerley recorded a visit from his East End friend Freddie, the former guardman (the "Johnnie" of *We Think the World of Joe*). Freddie made the dog happy before he turned his attention to her master. "He began to tickle her tits and the base of her little vulva..." Queenie liked this, and all that followed, very much indeed; and then, "after Queenie's turn, it was mine." Is the reader who is taken aback by this very naive, or inhuman? How often must the term "dog-lover" be taken literally, as in

Freddie's case? And does it matter much anyway?

No one bothered to make Nancy happy in any way at all; that was part of the trouble. Mr King, in his selection from Ackerley's manuscript diaries — about a quarter, he says, of the whole — has concentrated on the relationship between Ackerley and his hysterical, irrational sister, three years younger: this means focusing on as well as the ubiquitous Queenie, since all three females were perpetually in rivalry for Ackerley's attention. Nancy and Queenie expressed their jealousy with tears and growls respectively; Aunt Bunney, raffish and independent, showed more reserve.

King describes Joe and Nancy in later years as living in "a ghastly caricature of the kind of marriage devoid of sex, that la held together merely by feelings of obligation, pity and guilt." Ackerley disliked almost all women. The diaries are peppered with his animus. "Women are natural vain and self-centred, interested in themselves or what people think of them." As for Nancy, who lacked an occupation, he knew of no

job "that a woman so uneducated, uninterested, vain, self-centred, hypochondriac, idle-minded, irresponsible, left-handed, ignorant and untalented could hold for a week." He didn't like the working classes either (of either sex) "with their irrationalities, and superstitions, and opinionatedness, and stubbornness, and food foibles, and laziness, and selfishness..." He had, as almost any page here will demonstrate, a fine if repetitive vein of commination, and makes one or two jokes: his mother, always running out something from the chemist, he calls "puss in Boots".

The only things he really liked were Queenie, and walking Queenie on Putney Heath or Wimbledon Common, and writing, and drinking with friends. Mostly he wanted to be left alone. Nancy was unable to leave him alone. The poor woman was living by herself in one room in Worthing and going slowly off her head. What she wanted was to live with Joe; but Aunt Bunney was living with Joe. So Nancy made a suicide attempt, and ended up in a mental hospital for a while. Joe was hit by remorse. Aunt Bunney nobly packed

her bags, and Nancy moved in with Joe — where she bickered and complained and failed even to mend his socks like Aunt Bunney did. She was to break down again, after the period covered by this book; but she survived her brother, and it was she who handed over to Mr King his legacy: these diaries.

It is a very sad and very dreary story that they tell. Ackerley records the endless trips up and down from Worthing to see Nancy, his rambling, inconclusive conversations and correspondence with her, rehearses her misfortunes and grievances and, with greater fluency, his own. The tone is that of someone monologuing on the top of a bus to a trapped audience: "First of all, I said, I shall be ready to take you in two or three weeks' time. Then I thought, that won't do. It only accounts for me, what about Bunney?" And so on for pages. This is garrulous writing, with no exchange value.

The book is worth reading for King's brilliant scene-setting introduction, in which he characterizes the *dramatis personae* and their habitat, Ackerley's shabby flat over a

pub looking out over the Putney towpath. King comments on the self-absorption that Joe Ackerley and Siegfried Sassoon had in common: the best writing by Ackerley in this book is a lively, ironic account of a holiday spent with Sassoon at Heytesbury Park, which is funny at the expense of both host and guest, well-observed and wonderfully recorded. It is not the only worthwhile part of the book, which is laced with fine paragraphs of descriptive writing, all far removed from his neurotic preoccupation with Nancy. One cannot, however, come between the diarist and Queenie. August 8, 1956:

Upon the concrete verandah the bars of my cage are cast, but the sun as it sinks below the balconies. How pretty the pattern they make, the bars of my cage. They lie beside me, bars of shadow, bars of brightness, on the concrete ground, they lie upon my body as I sit in my deck chair and upon the body of my dog beside me. We are within our cage together, the cage we have chosen, as happy as it is possible to be with death drawing closer.

Ant's eye view

By Charles Madge

TOM ROKINSON:
Of This Our Time
A Journalist's Story, 1905-50
317pp. Hutchinson. £8.95.
0 09 147860 X

This engaging, sparely written, unself-indulgent account takes Tom Rokinson through childhood, school and university and up to the editor of *Picture Post*. In a postscript he says he has already overrun the words allotted, and has only managed to reach the age of forty-five. One hopes he will soon bring the story up to date on his subsequent thirty and odd years.

Like all good autobiographies *Of This Our Time* succeeds in conveying the inner unity of the life through the turmoil of action and engagement. It is soon apparent that the author is unusually reserved even for

an Englishman, but that he has succeeded in presenting a believable self in spite of this and almost because of it. When he was nine, a family friend said tribute to the characters of his three brothers but of him would only say "Tommy's a dark horse". When he was sixteen, at family meal-times "Tom's reserve and preoccupation with his own interests cast a chill down one side of the table."

At intervals, the inner self is revealed, only to be hidden again both from himself and from other people. Sent to boarding school at the age of seven, in his weekly letter home he wrote about a dream he had had the night before, in which he was lying on the grass to the summertime when a seagull, "white as only a sunlit seagull can be", sailed across the sky. "This was all but it filled me with a rapture as intense as though I had been given a momentary glimpse of heaven. But the letter was never posted — he relieved it and sent instead the usual schoolboy phrases.

There are waking visionary experiences too. Aged fourteen, alone on

the moors near Kendal, "my self seemed to melt away; viewer and scene blended into one. Time stopped or had never existed." This particular experience, he says, has never been repeated, but there are others nearly as striking.

At eighteen he saw a pretty girl on a bus "wearing a thin printed dress with a vacant place next to her. The inhibitions of my nature, I could more easily run to the back of the bus and throw myself into the road than do what I am longing to do: take a couple of strides and drop into the empty place beside her." This is the only implicit reference to which he subscribes his job at W. S. Crawford's advertising agency, and point a single line explains that the extra money this gave him was important "since by now I had a wife and two children to support".

The next chapter is headed "Marriage". He had met Antonia White

(about to publish *Frost in May*) at Crawford's. She liked parties and social life and had interesting friends, including Geoffrey Giggson, who worked on the *Morning Post* and was planning to launch a new poetry magazine. In such company, Tom often became gloomy and morose, searching his mind vainly for anything to say. Four chapters later, on the eve of the Second World War, and after he has become editor of *Picture Post*, he lets fall that he has married Antonia, "this time to a girl of Jewish family from Vienna, Gent Deutsch. Five years and nine months later, when his political views were diverging from those of his proprietor Edward Hulton to a point where they had to part company, it was also evident to him that his marriage with Gent was coming to an end. They had little contact, he was immersed in his magazine; the word 'workaholic' had not then been invented, but if it had it would have fitted me all too well".

After the final rift with Hulton in 1950, in the period of reflection that followed, he began to be haunted by the phrase "Is there a pattern in the carpet?" accompanied by the visual image of a carpeted room across which an ant, or some other small creature, was attempting to make its way. "It can see in front of it or behind, to left and right, but it cannot look up at the ceiling or see anything more beneath itself but the floor across which it struggles. In its progress it keeps coming across patches that are smooth and others where the pile is thick and progress difficult. At times it is surprised by tufts in unexpected colours. Having now got some way across the room, the question the ant has begun to ask himself is, 'Is there a pattern in the carpet?'" Meanwhile he had met Dorothy, widow of the writer Hugh Kingsmill. "In two or three years' time Dorothy and I would settle down together and embark on a marriage which would last for the remainder of our lives."

For the most part *Shadows on the Grass* is immensely agreeable, full of good boy's own cricket and army stories, set in such places as Baginbun, Kenya and Aden, but with surprising embellishments. The cricket details are always expert, however ridiculous the drama.

But though cricket is the theme of the book, the agent of memory, there is much else to admire; Cambridgeshire in the last days of the Raj, are vividly touched off. There are, too, crafty vignettes of such non-cricketers as Maurice Bowra, Dadi, R. C. Marjoribanks, Noel Annan and L. P. Wilkinson among others, though what the more normal attitudes of the episodes is difficult to figure. *Shadows on the Grass* could change their lives. I am only sorry that the story finishes when it does, shortly after the date at which it is set. I am only sorry that it is not simply, he says, because he had left it — and seven years later the paper folded, it remains a legend in twentieth-century journalism.

The ferment of fashion

By Keith Thomas

LAWRENCE STONE:
The Past and the Present
214pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul.
£8.75.
0 7100 0628 4

The most disarming feature of this book is its dedication: "To Sir Robert Brierly, John Prestwich and R. H. Tawney, who first taught me what history is all about." It is now nearly twenty years since Lawrence Stone left these shores for Princeton University and there is a generation which knows him only as the leading figure of that most thriving and innovative of history departments and the director of its Shelby Cullom Davis Center, a celebrated arena for historical pugilism, where visiting historians defend their papers against aggressive attack over several long and punishing hours. Yet in singling out his public-school teacher, his Oxford tutor and another important early mentor, Professor Stone is making more than a sentimental obeisance. He is reminding us that the truly formative influences upon him are not transatlantic at all. He is a product of Charterhouse and Christ Church and a former Oxford don.

Admittedly, that was all some time ago. It is hard to believe that Mr Prestwich would have let the young Stone get away with some of the passages in this book, such as the confusion of the great Bishop Stubbs with his lesser namesake C. W. Stubbs, or the remark that K. B. McFarlane (and not Charles Plummer) invented the term "bastard feudalism". But it is essentials which matter, and the essential features of Stone's enormous achievement as a historian are new ideas, his rapid facility in digesting complex material and his capacity to achieve a clear and vividly written synthesis — precisely the qualities which the Oxford weekly essay is supposed to inculcate.

The book itself is made up of reprinted writings over the past two decades. There are three long surveys of current historiographical developments, plus a dozen or so long book reviews, the latter mostly taken from the *New York Review of Books*. The reviews deal with such large issues in early modern history as the Reformation, Puritanism, the seventeenth century. They also discuss some of the topics in social history which have become very fashionable in recent years: crime, witchcraft, childhood, old age and death. They are written with characteristic pungency. Stone is a believer in adversary history. He is quick to reduce a complicated argument to a series of numbered points and equally quick to tell us what the flaws in the argument are. Like most reviewers, he cannot always resist a chance to pay off old scores: Professor G. R. Sayer is firmly rebuked and so is Lord Dacre (another of Stone's old tutors, but not one who appears in the dedication). Stone does not mince words when he spots error: a suggestion made by one historian is "pure poppycock"; and much of the "Golden Age of Historiography", characterised by a "bubbling ferment of new ideas, new approaches and new facts", he feels "peculiarly fortunate to have lived through, and taken some part in, so exciting a transformation of my profession". (He is not quite consistent about the duration of this golden age, for he elsewhere remarks that "the last forty years" were "together with the forty years before the first World War", "the most fruitful period in the whole history of the profession". If the profession began only around 1870, this would mean that it is only thirty years or so which have been too confused to see for himself. He can occasionally be careless about details, but he is consistently fertile in hypothesis. Teachers who find these old reviews full of provocative assertions, ideal for discussion, their pupils will discover in Stone a lively guide to much historical writing: those who want, say, a

quick summary of Philippe Ariès's views on the history of death or of Barrington Moore's thesis about political development can begin here.

It is, however, the historiographical essays which deserve most attention. For Stone is a remarkably candid and self-conscious chronicler of his own time and his account of the current state of historical writing rises large and important issues. It falls into three parts: a chapter on "History and the Social Sciences in the Twentieth Century"; a survey of "Prosopography"; and an article on "The Revival of Narrative" which first appeared in *Past and Present* two years ago. (To them could have been added his survey of "Family History in the 1980s" in *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 1981). Together, they constitute a challenging (and challengeable) survey of what has been achieved by recent historians and what has gone wrong.

Stone's picture of historical writing during the past hundred and thirty years is a clear one. The story is of a false dawn, followed by a long overcast morning, then a brilliant afternoon and, after that, sunset. In the mid-nineteenth century, he argues, it seemed possible that history could be a subject with the widest possible implications. He quotes the long-forgotten inaugural lecture of H. H. Vaughan, one of Oxford's more obscure Regius Professors, who urged in 1848 that the historian's task was "a disclosure of the critical changes in the condition of society" and that his subject-matter should comprehend not just politics and administration, but also "law, customs, tastes, traditions, beliefs, convictions, maxims, pastimes and ceremonies". This Aristotle-like vision of the future was rapidly clouded by the development after 1870 of academic history as an austere professional discipline, with its scope restricted to "the administrative and constitutional evolution of the nation state and the diplomatic and military relationship between those states". Social history was largely ignored and relations with the adjacent social sciences were virtually non-existent.

Then in the 1930s, with the foundation of *Annales* in France and *The Economic History Review* in England, the attack upon *l'histoire événementielle* began. At first the goal stimulus was economics, frequently combined with a Marxist sociology. In England this period culminated in the great "gentry"-controversy of the 1950s, in which Stone played a leading and ultimately triumphant part. Later, in the 1960s and 1970s, demography and social anthropology became the innovating influences. They drew the attention of historians to the history of the family and to the study of popular beliefs, customs and rituals. The widening of the subject-matter of history was further stimulated by the social changes of those decades. Radicals, women, blacks, children, the elderly: all participated in the search for a "usable past". For Stone, the past twenty-five years have been "something of a heroic phase in the evolution of historical understanding". It was a "Golden Age of Historiography", characterised by a "bubbling ferment of new ideas, new approaches and new facts". He feels "peculiarly fortunate to have lived through, and taken some part in, so exciting a transformation of my profession". (He is not quite consistent about the duration of this golden age, for he elsewhere remarks that "the last forty years" were "together with the forty years before the first World War", "the most fruitful period in the whole history of the profession". If the profession began only around 1870, this would mean that it is only thirty years or so which have been too confused to see for himself. He can occasionally be careless about details, but he is consistently fertile in hypothesis. Teachers who find these old reviews full of provocative assertions, ideal for discussion, their pupils will discover in Stone a lively guide to much historical writing: those who want, say, a

large quantities of electronically-processed data, have turned into "statistical junkies"; and their findings have been expressed in "so mathematically intelligible a form that they are unintelligible to the majority of the historical profession". Psycho-history has proved a disaster area: "a desert strewn with the wreckage of elaborate, chromium-plated vehicles which broke down soon after departure". The study of women and sexuality is "in serious danger of suffering from intellectual overkill". The relationship between history and the social sciences is "increasingly tenuous". Even the best of the "new historians have lost credit because of their consistent neglect of politics and decision-making, war and the exercise of power.

The heroic phase is, therefore, over. As the financial cuts to the universities dry up the supply of fresh young blood, we may expect a period of "quiet consolidation or, at best, received wisdom". Stone even diagnoses "the end of the attempt to produce a coherent and scientific explanation of change in the past"; "it may be that the time has come for a return to the importance of the concrete, the particular and the circumstantial." In his essay on "the revival of narrative" he emphasizes the tendency of some recent historians to move from analysis to description (albeit "thick description"); the exploration of a single event in order to illuminate a whole social system or structure of beliefs, in the manner of *Whigs and Hunters* or *The Cheese and the Worms*.

Many historians, particularly those who live in universities less sensitive to changing fashion than is Princeton, will not recognize this picture at all. For them history is proceeding in much the same way as it always has. They have not tired of quantification, for they never took it up in the first place. Neither is there any elaborate intellectual overkill about their study of women and sexuality. Stone's view of the subject is from that alternative triangle, Princeton, Paris and *Past and Present*. As he concedes, the bulk of the historical profession during his "heroic age" "continued to concern itself with political history, just as it had always done". The "new" historians became the "power elite" in France and to a large extent the USA. But Stone, the observer, never "captured the critical levers of academic power and prestige" in Oxford, Cambridge and London.

To that extent, Stone's picture of the past twenty-five years contains a strong element of autobiography. For he was raised in the Oxford history school on a diet of politics and diplomacy. He was inspired by the example of Tawney to work on the relations between economic and political change. His great work, *The*

Crisis of the Aristocracy, was originally given a red binding (the Clarendon Press's colour for economics), but its contents reflected the author's move away from economic history narrowly conceived to the study of the family and of the nobility's whole style of life. At Princeton, Professor Stone enthusiastically took up quantification and, through the Davis Center, pioneered the "new" social history. In the 1970s his largest work was on *The Family, Sex and Marriage*. Now he has come to the conclusion that the scope for innovation in this area is much reduced and that we are in for a duller and less exciting period. To that extent, his book is somewhat reminiscent of one of those spiritual autobiographies written at the end of the Civil War period in England, in which the author recounts how brought up a godly Puritan but seeking new light, he turned first to the Presbyterians, then to the Independents, then, as the pace grew faster and the spiritual intoxication headed, to the frenzy of the Ranters and the Muggletonians, until finally, as passion subsided, he found refuge in a quiet haven of the Quakers. True to this pattern, Stone ends on an uncommittal note, stressing that in his house there are many mansions and that "methodological diversity" and "ideological pluralism" are essential if one is to avoid "tyranny" and "narcissism".

Precisely because Stone has participated vigorously in so many of the historiographical trends of his time, there is much truth in what he says. Social history has indeed entered a second generation, whose characteristic work will be microscopic in approach, careful and exact in tone, slunning the bold theme and the large-scale generalization. This is why *Past and Present*, as James Obelkevich remarks in a shrewd appraisal of that journal in the French magazine *La Débat* (December 1981), has become in some ways a duller and less innovative affair. In the USA social history appears to be still in full spate (hence the libel that *Past and Present* has British editors but American authors). In the UK its prospects are less good, particularly now that the Social Science Research Council has abolished its history committee altogether and put social history under the general heading of "Economic Affairs".

Meanwhile, political history, which had inevitably tended to attract those of conservative disposition during the years when all the radicals were chasing off after social history, has entered a highly conservative phase, at least so far as the early modern period is concerned. Stone refers to "the new British school of young antiquarian empiricists" — "erudite and intelligent chroniclers of the petty event". He has in mind the neo-Namierism of those who are busy taking the ideology out of the Civil

War and the Protestantism out of the Protestant Reformation, in an effort to reveal that each of these great events was unwanted by the mass of the population and is only to be understood in terms of the machinations of a tiny power elite: all this, ironically, at a time when the ideology is busily being put back into Namier's own eighteenth century. At Oxford many able young graduates students now wish to work on topics in Tudor political or diplomatic history of a kind which might have been devised sixty years ago by A. F. Pollard. It is as if the "heroic age" had never been.

Where then does the future lie? No doubt, with the pluralism which Stone recommends. "History" has never been a clearly defined subject of study and it is likely to continue as what he calls a "loose confederation of jealously independent topics and techniques". Yet there is one area in which the next decade may well see considerable progress. This is the exploration of the mental assumptions which underlie social behaviour. As Stone remarks, historians have long operated with a three-tier model of reality. First, and most important, came economic and demographic facts. Then the social structure. Lastly, intellectual, religious, cultural and political development. This model essentially reflected the Marxist concept of ideas as "superstructure" erected on a material base. Stone correctly observes that this economic and demographic determinism has been undermined in recent years by a recognition of culture and ideas as independent variables. What has been happening is a shift from materialism to a modified idealism, as so-called "material needs", like food or clothing, are themselves seen to be shaped by prior mental constructs: all peoples eat food and wear clothes, but they do not agree about what is edible or about what clothes are necessary. A concern with cultural categories, with symbols and systems of mental classification, already he observed in many different areas of historical writing, from art history to the history of political thought. The older functionalist anthropology which inspired much historical writing in the 1960s may have little more to teach. But the newer anthropology which places its emphasis on meaning rather than function still offers a rich resource to the next generation of historians. It will be fascinating to see how the Shelby Cullom Davis Center responds to this latest intellectual challenge.

A *Biographical Dictionary of the Maryland Legislature, 1635-1789*, Volume 1: A-F (477pp. Johns Hopkins University Press. £11.75. 0 8018 1995 4) is the latest volume in the series *Studies in Maryland History and Culture*.

Queening King Willow

By Alan Ross

SIMON RAVEN:
Shadows on the Grass
158pp. Blond and Briggs. £7.95.

"Stains on the trousers" might have done equally well for the title of Simon Raven's cricketing memoirs, since masturbation and accounts of what he calls "the other" feature almost as large in the story as cricket. Sillily, one does not expect Mr Raven to play studiously down the line for long and he has produced a characteristically and hilariously wry of fiction, masquerading as autobiography.

I say "work of fiction", since much of the book is written in dialogue and the dialogue is put into the mouths of real people. Raven has an idiosyncratic attitude to etymology, his book moving back from army life in 1957 to prep school in 1938 and then forwards again, but these faithfully reported and lengthy conversations are never less than twenty years old, more often nearer forty. Raven has never been one to spout a good story by sticking too closely to the truth and one must presume he has taken full advantage of a novelist's licence in the interests of characterization and entertainment. Nevertheless, I imagine a number of people will be surprised to find always agreeably, at the words put into their

mouths. Luckily quite a few of the characters — E. M. Forster, J. R. Ackerley, Ronald Storr — are dead.

Raven admits he has been unlucky in his brief encounters with famous men. Joan Green, lunched with in Greece, seems only to have complained, "On ne peut pas manger correctement en Athènes". Evelyn Waugh, encountered in Heywood Hill's bookshop, simply repeated like a mechanical toy to an assistant "Isn't it hot in your shop, isn't it hot in your shop", and Patrick White, at dinner in his own house in Sydney, is remembered only for rebuking an obsequious guest "I shouldn't have asked you; I should have known better. Queens Means Queens."

There are a lot of "scenes" in this book: scenes in Charterhouse dormitories, scenes in rooms in Cambridge, scenes in Army messes. Simon Raven loved all three institutions, yet typically maintained too far and too long in disgrace. His attitude to his fellow cricketers in one is not unfavourably camp, though homosexual encounters took place with quite the frequency and facility suggested. Still, such adventures are the stuff of Raven's fiction and he is rarely other than genial, light-hearted and appreciative.

He starts and finishes his book with romantic prose that would not have been out of place in Blunden's *Cricket Country*. By page eight,

however, *tristesse* has given way to farce: at a liaison centre set up in a Ravell during manoeuvres Captain seizer "so heavily engaged in masturbation with a bat handle in the Visitors Changing Room that he judged it unkind and possibly unwise to interrupt her." The unlikelihood of that scene suggests the wood of much that follows. These are cricketing incidents "re-invented" to the author's taste. Many of the characters, events and settings undoubtedly existed, but the narrative as presented has been polished up for the reader's enjoyment. That's what novelists are for, or so I imagine Raven would argue.

As cricket books go, *Shadows on the Grass* is unique. It is neither equally for *Guy New* and *The Cricketer*, Grant and whatever magazine. Charterhouse produced these particularly affectionate and revealing portraits as schoolboys of James Prior (Charterhouse XI, 1945, the same year as P. B. H. May, Reck-Meggs) and William Prior in a memorable whisky-drinking contest at Delell in 1947 and on Raven's evidence would make an admirable Prime Minister.

At heart Raven remains true to his early passions. That is the charm of the engaging product of Alfred de Vigny out of Oscar Wilde, if that were possible. He writes beautifully, like to pen what he makes of that

things, the transience of pleasure. He is decently aware of his own faults as a young man "idiot, conceited, slutish, self-opinionated" etc, but his sense of occasion and relish for his adventure make up for a lot. It is difficult to tell how seriously he regards his own snobishness, sometimes unattractively phrased, or his anti-socialism, but when either is in evidence the writing takes on a meanness that is not typical.

For the most part *Shadows on the Grass* is immensely agreeable, full of good boy's own cricket and army stories, set in such places as Baginbun, Kenya and Aden, but with surprising embellishments. The cricket details are always expert, however ridiculous the drama.

But though cricket is the theme of the book, the agent of memory, there is much else to admire; Cambridgeshire in the last days of the Raj, are vividly touched off. There are, too, crafty vignettes of such non-cricketers as Maurice Bowra, Dadi, R. C. Marjoribanks, Noel Annan and L. P. Wilkinson among others, though what the more normal attitudes of the episodes is difficult to figure. *Shadows on the Grass* could change their lives. I am only sorry that the story finishes when it does, shortly after the date at which it is set. I am only sorry that it is not simply, he says, because he had left it — and seven years later the paper folded, it remains a legend in twentieth-century journalism.

THE ARDEN SHAKESPEARE

Hamlet

Prince of Denmark

Edited by HAROLD JENKINS

Hamlet is arguably the most famous play in the world. It is also a play of many problems. In this edition Harold Jenkins discusses and sheds new light on the numerous and often notorious questions which study of the play raises.

The text is based primarily on the 'Good' Quarto of 1604-5, believed to be printed from Shakespeare's own manuscript, but also makes use of the Folio of 1623 and the 'Bad' Quarto of 1605. The introduction describes each of these in detail. It also presents an original interpretation of Shakespeare's play which, centring upon Hamlet's dual role as both agent and victim of revenge, shows how the play conceives of revenge, as combining both good and evil and hence how the revenge plot links with those mysteries of man's being which dominate Hamlet's meditations.

592 pages Hardback 0 416 17910 X: £12.50
Paperback 0 416 17920 7: £3.95

METHUEN
11 New Fetter Lane London EC4P 4EE

The mission of Barebone's

By Blair Worden

AUSTIN WOOLRYCH:

Commonwealth to Protectorate
466pp. Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press. £22.50.
0 19 822659 4

Commonwealth to Protectorate is the story of a year: 1653, perhaps the most improbable and the most dramatic twelve months in English political history. In January, the Rump of the Long Parliament, the sole constitutional link with the opposition to Charles I in the 1640s, was clinging to power despite mounting criticism from the New Model Army, whose officers were pressing for a speedy reform of religion and the law. On April 20, the Rump was theatrically dissolved by Oliver Cromwell's musketeers. What would the army put in its place? As in January 1649, when they had executed the King and then wondered how to replace him, the officers did not know. After weeks of struggle within the army council, there was summoned the hand-picked assembly of saints which is known to history as Barebone's Parliament. When it met on July 4, Cromwell believed that the years of Egyptian bondage might at last be over, and the new Jerusalem in sight: "this may be the door to usher in things that God hath promised and prophesied of, and set the hearts of His people to wait for..." Indeed, I do think something is at the door, we are at the threshold," Barebone's, sharing Cromwell's exalted opinion of his mission, announced in its opening declaration that

many, if not all the people of God in all the world, are in a more than usual expectation of some great and strange changes coming on the world, which we believe can hardly be paralleled with the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And we do not yet know that any records of all the nations in the world (we scarce except the Jews themselves) can afford such a series of divine providences, or more clear impression of the goings forth and actings of God in any people, than hath been in these nations.

Four years later, reflecting ruefully on the political calamity which had ensued, Cromwell took a less sanguine view of Barebone's: "It was a story of my own weakness and folly." The "naked truth" was that "the issue was not answerable to the design." From the army, the second half of 1653 had indeed proved a period of stark political education. If the officers had wanted of the Rump's dilatoriness and conservatism, they soon became frightened by the rapidly and the extent of change under Barebone's, which threatened to abolish titles and Chancery and appeared to call the rights of property into question. In December the musketeers were again called in to clear the chamber. This time, a group of officers led by John Lambert was ready with an alternative, the Instrument of Government, which made Cromwell Protector and abandoned the principle of parliamentary sovereignty. Cromwell, who clutched at the new constitution as might a drowning man at a raft, a dismal almost futile ceremony of installation was hurried through. The Commonwealth was over: the Protectorate had begun.

Austin Woolrych's horizons are not confined by the events of 1653. His opening section looks back to September 1651, when the defeat of Charles II at Worcester had enabled the New Model Officers to concentrate on political reconstruction. His concluding chapters look ahead to 1653-8, the years of Cromwell's sovereignty, which he sees (rightly, in my view) as a period of more constructive government than has recently been allowed. But his principal concern is Barebone's. Why was it? What sort of men sat in it? Was its failure inevitable, or the product of conflicts which might have gone another way? Professor Woolrych answers these questions with impeccable scholarship, and with a

width of sympathy which rescues well-meaning and legitimately perplexed MPs from centuries of heartless parody. His meticulous study of the assembly's membership removes "the double stigma of sectarianism and trade": at least four-fifths of the members were recognised as members of the gentry class by their unbiased contemporaries; and although the Fifth Monarchists, with whose principles Barebone's has often been associated, did much to discredit the assembly, they commanded only a small following within it. The legislative preoccupations of Barebone's (one of which resulted in the introduction of civil marriage) are shown to have been more often practical than fanciful.

But Woolrych has no wish to hide the assembly's limitations. Barebone's had no roots in the political nation and was "unintentionally cocooned from the feelings and pressures of the regions." Its leaders were politically inexperienced; ablest members were its youngest. Chit-chatting rhetoric, which might initially disguise divisions, inflamed them once ideas had to be converted into programmes. Barebone's was dissolved, in the end, because the alternatives seemed to be bloodshed and anarchy.

The Cromwellian propaganda which rapidly discredited the dispersed parliament has helped to obscure from posterity the hopes which Cromwell held of it. In Barebone's he sought to create a forum of the godly party, that broad and invisible political church which to his dismay had been fractured by Pride's Purge and which, in so far as the officers would let him, he strove to re-create throughout the last decade of his life. By energetic legislation and by sobriety of discourse, the godly party would set national reform in motion. A reformed society, guided by a puritanized nobility and gentry, would be a stable society. Stability would create the conditions for those satisfactory parliamentary elections which Cromwell always wished to hold but for which his countrymen never seemed quite ready: Lord make me electorally chaste, but not yet.

To Cromwell, the godly party was to be found across a wide spectrum of background and belief. He had no time for constitutional or theological rigidity. He was exasperated by men of fixed posture, whether they were Republicans, Royalists, Presbyterians or Fifth Monarchists. Hence the flexibility of his constitutional experiments, and hence the erratic course of his regnum politics. Yet Cromwell's inconsistencies of political behaviour and consistent religious and social policies, which he sought to implement through such various constitutional machinery. He wanted from Barebone's what he had wanted from the Rump, and what he wanted from the Protectorate: propagation of the gospel, reform of the ministry, religious toleration, limited and practical amendments to the legal system. His supporters urged on Barebone's the schemes they had urged on the Rump: the Hale Commission's report on law reform, and Owen's plan for the improvement of the clergy. The Rump gave Cromwell too much: in the Protectorate, he sought a balance. Woolrych's decision to look backward and forward beyond 1653, while it makes for a long book and deprives him of a clear focus, valuably reminds us of the continuity of reforming purpose of which beneath the broken surface of interregnum politics.

Commonwealth to Protectorate is an important and authoritative study most frequently consulted by students of the interregnum. It is, as an easy book to read, not a work of "mature and often partisan sources. Woolrych has frequently to hang his narrative on committee-lists and the names of committees - not the most nutritive of evidence. And yet he has brought to his subject more patience and more precision

than his predecessors, whose arguments he challenges or modifies with disarming fairness and courtesy; but the non-specialist reader may sometimes wonder whether the issues of contention merit the space accorded them. In his techniques and in his been much influenced by two remarkable books, Gerald Aylmer's *The State's Servants* (and still more David Underdown's *Pride's Purge*, which may not have been ideal models for his own rather different subject. Like Aylmer and Underdown, Woolrych has provided not only an important story but an indispensable work of biographical reference. The price of that double achievement is a more leisurely pace than the material will always bear.

Still, one would sooner have too much of Woolrych's prose than too little. He would never advance an unconsidered judgment or write an unclear sentence (so that one regrets all the more that Oxford University Press, whose printing standards appear to decline as the quality of its history list improves, should once again have produced a book riddled with misprints). His discussions of the issues which divided Barebone's are distinguished by an elegance, a lucidity and an earnestness which afford many pleasures and which bring light where earlier accounts

Fit for a new king

By K. H. D. Haley

LOIS G. SCHWOERER:

The Declaration of Rights, 1689
391pp. Johns Hopkins University Press. £18.50.
0 8018 2430 3

A week, we are constantly reminded, is a long time in politics; and if the Bill of Rights Incorporating the Declaration was indeed England's "greatest constitutional document since Magna Carta", as David Ogg called it, then there is ample justification for a book focused on the critical fortnight of debates in January and February, 1689.

It was an unusually complex and interesting situation. Though the Whigs later claimed the credit for the Glorious Revolution, Tories as well had welcomed the intervention of William and Mary to secure a free parliament and a reversal of James II's policies. Some had even appeared in arms for William; and the same as deposition, which could not easily be reconciled with the loyalty to the Stuart cause and the religious faith on which they had prided themselves in the reign of Charles II. Fortunately for Britain, James had fled the country; but the question what regime could take its place, keep James out and still satisfy Tory principles, was a difficult one.

Moreover, as Lois G. Schwoerer says, in December 1688 "there was not an entire absence of partisan identification", and all party men had fresh in their minds the arguments of the Exclusion Crisis less than a decade earlier. Many Whigs were only too prone to agree, in effect, "I told you so." It had been found "by experience", said Colonel Bligh, "to be inconsistent with the safety and welfare of the Protestant kingdom, to be governed by a Popish prince" - words which the author rather oddly says met the requirements of Tories, who were in fact wrong and that they had been totally excluded but would meet the case. Among the Tories, there were currents; but some, in line with their preference for "limited monarchy" on the powers of a Popish successor which Charles II had professed to accept in 1681, wanted a claim of rights as an alternative to exclusion pure and simple; they lost interest when it became clear that in practice there was no alternative to a change of

have brought heat. If there is a substantial criticism to be made of Woolrych's interpretation, it is one that could equally fairly be directed at all of us who have written about the parliamentary history of the interregnum. The criticism concerns the limited vocabulary with which we try to recapture the political behaviour of a distant age.

Woolrych announces early on that if the book "has a unifying theme, it is the continuing tension between radical millenarian Puritanism and moderate constitutionalism." Soon we are re-introduced to the familiar "categorisation" of puritan MPs as "moderate" and "radicals". Woolrych recognizes that the distinction has "shortcomings", because it is too neat. Perhaps it is open to the more profound objection that it restricts our imagination. How much can we learn about a man who lived three centuries ago from the description of him as a "mild moderate", a "mild radical", "very radical", "a radical but not an extremist", a "possible 'essentially a moderate' moderate", "generally moderate" or "of a more moderate hue" (and so on)? Differences within the radical ranks seem to be largely a matter of emotional temperature, the radicals being "fiery" or "militant". The language in which Woolrych distin-

guishes shades of opinion in Barebone's is almost exactly that in which it has recently been customary to describe the quarrels in the Labour Party.

That language is not necessarily inaccurate, even if members of Barebone's might have been puzzled by it. But is it adequate? No doubt there is a sense in which political groupings follow repeated patterns throughout the ages, and in which only the issues change. But it is not a very interesting sense. Woolrych's study is not "high politics" of the school. It has the sociological dimension which has been the principal contribution of the post-war history of the writing of political history. The dimension which the book lacks is in the history of ideas and of theology. How do we re-create the mental processes of politicians who found in the history of the people of Israel not merely a metaphor for their own travels but a divinely and historically ordained parallel to them? How could political events come to be influenced by the belief that England should be governed by a Jewish sanhedrin, or its legal system modelled on the Jewish code? Woolrych, whose dispassionate account is so excellent in other ways, does not pursue such questions very far. But then, which chronicler of puritan politics has?

these, or the slips which are present, such as the spelling of the name of the famous painter as "Reubens", or the references (more than once) to William "signing [sic] the Bill of Rights into law"; they matter much less than the carefully detailed account of the actual debates. But one may doubt whether the view of the Declaration itself as novel as it is here claimed to be. The theory is that the Declaration changed not only the person of the king, but the kingship itself, by which is meant the royal powers; we are even told again that the ceremony in which the document was offered to William represented "the pre-eminence of Parliament in England's mixed government". The idea that the Revolution achieved this is scarcely new, and as the author rightly contends, the change was not merely a "palace revolution". The Whigs drafting the Declaration no doubt aimed at restricting the royal powers but the question remains how effective the statement of rights was in achieving this, with as much as possible uncontroversial, ambiguous or harmless in terms of William's immediate needs.

Perhaps the flight of James II and the war situation which lasted until 1697 did more for the liberties which Whigs had claimed than did the list here compiled. But one thing the Declaration did do, clearly and effectively. The frontispiece shows it being offered to William and Mary, already in the Banqueting Hall, sitting under a canopy of state as though they were already monarchs, and William's speech in reply avoided regarding the claim of rights as a condition of the transfer. But whatever the significance of the famous words, "abdication" and "resignation" in the paper, the fact remained that James II was excluded, and that by the authority of the Convention new rulers were established by something more than the medieval change of dynasty, in order to carry out policies more acceptable to the political nation; and it was this that the former Exclusionists cheered.

Milton Studies XV, edited by James D. Simmons (255pp., University of Pittsburgh Press. £ 8229 3449 3), contains twelve articles including Robert Thomas Fallon's "Milton's Epics and the Spanish War", John Dixon Hunt's "Milton and the Making of the English Landscape Garden", and Lana Cable's "Coupling Logic and Milton's Doctrine of Divorce".

Spilling the Elizabethan beans

By Valentine Cunningham

ROBERT NYE:

The Voyage of the Destiny
387pp. Hamish Hamilton. £8.50.
0 241 10742 3

Robert Nye's hottest line is doing up, or doing over, old literary properties. With boisterous skill he has refurbished the myths of Falstaff, Merlin and Faust, as now he turns his rumpling hand to the reputation of Sir Walter Raleigh. Lover, husband, father, voyager, and royal puppet, famous interpreter of pricey cloth between regal pumps and awkward mud, prisoner, poet, and historian of the world, Raleigh offers an enticing mixture of writer and man of action. What we know of his life combines bloodletting, sauciness and penmanship much too handsily for a novelist of Robert Nye's predilections to pass up.

The Voyage of the Destiny gives us the log of Raleigh's final voyage - the one he was released from the Tower for, his last no-hope hunt for gold in Spanish Guiana. Which is gripping enough. The journal is also, though, an apology for his life. Raleigh intends for his son Cerew: the inside story of Raleigh's risings and fallings in Royal esteem. And this is more gripping still. Knowing he has a strong Rabelaisian reputation to keep up, Nye pulls out all his plain-speaking, lip-smacking, bawdy stops. His Raleigh is keen to tell home truths, to spill beans, to debunk himself and all the others. No sane and no stomach will be left unturned. Myths and reputations must all go. "My son, I am no giant (and God knows) no god". Actually, Raleigh owns he disliked the sea. He even disliked Queen Elizabeth. He wonders whether he loves his wife, whether he's a coward, whether he knowingly sacrificed his older son Wat to the Spanish pikemen.

The city of London? It stinks. The sweet Thames is in fact an unsavoury running latrine. Elizabeth sported "cheesy layers of underwear". She had "cheese between her toes". As for King James's toes, he liked nothing better than padding them in the entrails of stags he'd just killed. Well, perhaps he enjoyed a bit more being taken by his catamite Villars, just as he was, all bloody in the hunting field. Other great men espoused nastiness no less eagerly than their monarch. The big arrangements, the Cecils and the Howards, did

the lighting for her. The closeness of their bond, "the oldest bond of the flesh", drives Timmo to avenge Violet's hurt at her husband's sexual infidelities, and the result is yet another rehearsal of the drama of Oedipus and his mother, enacted by stereotyped characters. The father-husband is Michael, a complacent academic-historian having an affair with encephalic-looking, doing studeo. Katy, a banal melodrama of enlarged mother-and-son, father-and-substitute daughter relations reaches its climax when Timmo sleeps with Daddy's mistress before symbolically blinding him by removing his glasses, the parents expel both kids from the house, Violet's domestic peace is re-established and the Madonnas reign supreme.

Yet Marina Warner has a very fine sense of form which, paradoxically, makes these crude manipulations of plot doubly unfortunate. The initial section of the novel is a beautifully sustained sequence, with precise lyrical depictions of ice-bound landscapes, as if one of Breughel's paintings of a snow scene had been slowly animated. The beauty of these makes the degeneration into dreadful bedroom and bathroom-bound scenes more disappointing, especially since their unintentional farcical quality lacks any hint of self-parody. One of the innumerable after-dinner, dialogue riffs: (Timmo) "I haven't any-

thing interesting to say." (Violet) "Do you think any of us have?"

The Skating Party is neatly structured around flashbacks which give depth and perspective to the characters' present confusion. These assets focus mainly on two episodes: Michael's early historical research into the ceremonial rites of Palau natives, particularly the sacrifice of a young girl, who is starved to death and who survives as a partial mirror image of mistress Katy; and Violet's investigations of forgotten frescoes of the Italian Renaissance. Both these episodes become allegorical - ritualized and pictorialized versions of lives and relationships which betray a tendency to reduce everything to art; and to be indifferent to human suffering as a result. When Violet is forced to witness a brutal confrontation between police and demonstrators during an anti-nuclear protest, she literally buries her head and refuses to admit the truth of what she sees around her: she admits to wanting nothing but the spell of sleep. Similarly, all the knots of kinship tying her to Michael and Timmo are unravelled once they are understood in relation to the frescoes hidden in a self-enclosed chamber, deep in the Vatican.

Given a sardonic control of tone, *The Skating Party* might have read as a self-critical, even self-parodying sat-

for poor Kit Marlowe, stabbed to death through the eyes. They and their like will do for Raleigh. In James's final coup against him Raleigh smells Bacon. At least knife-eyed Marlowe cannot be said for some of James's foul-breathed emissaries, or even pub-crawling Ben Jonson.

And so, gossipily, rumbustiously, on and on. Raleigh's prose is grimly underlined by any talk whatsoever: turds and pucks, gallows and pox, the messy slaughtering of Irish Spaniards, the direct racking of poets, it slurps there all up with relish. If there's blood between Raleigh's fingers as he writes, and on occasion there is, he'll say so outright. Sometimes, but only sometimes, a curious lapse in this customary outspokenness occurs: for example, when Raleigh gets around to telling what went on in Elizabeth's privy of privy chambers. We never quite learn what exactly happened there, but this indiscreet discretion is doubtless meant to be titillating.

Heppily, there's more to Nye and

Raleigh than mere ribaldry, for all the ribaldry's attractiveness. Raleigh is much given to pious reflections about fathers and sons, and to less pious ones about the function of literary substitutes in his story - his own tutorship of James's son Henry, Raleigh's own son Wat, the catamites who call James "Dad". Ironies especially around the strife on European scene: Spain against England, Catholic against Protestant, Christian coven against Christian coven. And Raleigh's consciousness of his story's family meanings is matched by the keen self-awareness of his writing as writing. Alert to current trends in the novel - he is after all one of the most regular of our fiction reviewers - Nye has made Raleigh the deftest of *nouveaux romanciers*.

It's a pointedly anachronistic role - at one moment Raleigh's pen even sprawls across the page in proleptic sympathy with Sterne's Uncle Toby's expressive gesture of narrative despair - but for all that, an

intriguing one. The poet Raleigh is shown continually worrying about his style and his method. He inhabits a consciously literary world. He's full of the doing and writings of Shakespeare and Seneca, Ovid and Harrington. He acts out given literary roles. Is he the Prince of Denmark, he wonders? Literariness pervades and characterizes his life. His renowned play with the cloak was, he thinks, a poem. His only deed against the Armada was composing an "Armada", as he calls it, of a narrating sentence about the battle.

His goal of El Dorado was a fiction: he invented it out of other men's preceding fictions. The bits of his own life and death he is not writing himself are written out by James, the master of cruel pantomimes. Raleigh's own story ends as he ends a poem about ending up - "Time shuts up the story of our days" and as he reflects on the actor Alen playing out the end of Marlowe's Faust, Raleigh lived by writing, was survived by his son's narration of his wordy execution, and now

he lives again in his own and Nye's memorializing text.

Clever stuff. Not, however, in the end, clever enough, perhaps. Ironically, *The Voyage of the Destiny* doesn't quite hang together. Even its spightful rollicking and niftiest raucous don't always help it over the lumpiness and bittiness of its narrative proceedings. Like Raleigh on the scaffold, it can be afflicted by severe bouts of long-windedness. And its bid for ultimate high seriousness is dragged down not just by its eager touch for the sordid and low. The "third Voyage" that the novel seeks to narrate - the one that's somehow beyond and different from the Guiana trip and the journey of Raleigh's life, in other words the mystical quest for Raleigh's, for man's destiny - is not only "difficult" for Raleigh to "define", it remains hard for the reader to grasp. And as Raleigh and Nye keep reaching and fumbling together for this ultimate meaning, they just miss giving one the satisfying sense that this novel is at last really getting the grip it wants on the mystery of Walter Raleigh.

Growth potential

By Lindsay Duguid

DEBORAH MOGGACH:

Hot Water Man
252pp. Cape. £6.95.
0 224 01994 5

According to the publishers, *Hot Water Man* "can hardly fail to remind" its readers of *A Passage to India*, and it is true that the more perceptive among them will probably spot the fact that Deborah Moggach's heroine is reading a copy of Forster's novel as she battles with the hot season. It is making a somewhat larger claim to suggest that Moggach's book resembles Forster's (it is most like the short stories of Ruth Praver Jhabvala in its toughness and humour), and it is in the end both kinder and more useful to ignore the literary echoes and to concentrate on the story in hand.

Hot Water Man is set in 1975 when Donald and Christine Manley take up residence in Karachi, where Donald's firm Cameron Chemicals (now manufacturing the Pill, where it has formerly marketed patent medicines and shirt stiffener) is estab-

lished. Living in a house in the European compound, K12 Housing Society, and waited on by the silent-footed Mohammed, Christine longs to make contact with the "real city" while Donald is obsessed with the stories of the Raj told to him by his grandfather who served in India. Their rocky marriage (which has not developed far from its beginnings in Crouch End) and Christine's inability to conceive are not helped by their failure to come to terms with modern Pakistan. Christine's notions of Women's Rights and liberal politics lead her to frequent the dubious quarters of the city and to mock the local British "Wives' Association", while Donald searches for remnants of his grandfather's time; neither can accept the reality of present-day Karachi. Shamime, the modern, westernized niece of a local minister, sums up these perplexities:

Shamime laughed. "Where's the shop?" "In a little passage where they sell antiques," said Christine. "At week-ends they have stalls. It's rather like your bazars actually. You know, lots of people, no cars, covered arcade, too, like in Karachi. Rather fun." "Sounds just like Camden Passage."

Christine paused. "So you've been there?" "Adore it. I love Islington and Hampstead."

The paradoxes contained in the meeting of East and West are further demonstrated when Shamime has an affair with Duke, an American pop-music developer and the son of a Baptist lay minister, who cares about his family, keeping fit and Progress: "This country of yours needs our Translux Hotel. I'm speaking to you straight. It's a great country, this Pakistan. Leastways it can be great. You have the possibilities, you have great growth potential."

The disappointments of these characters are neatly aligned. At the end of the book Shamime enters into an arranged marriage, having learnt that Western ideas of romantic love are not what she has been led to believe. Duke flees to the careful puritanism of the United States, having learnt that energy is no match for the williness of the East. Donald, having learnt that his grandfather sired a child on an Indian girl and then abandoned her, perceives that his dreams of the Raj were inaccurate as well as anachronistic. Christine triumphantly gives birth, having renounced her charts and thermo-

meters in favour of a visit to a local fertility shrine. That all is not what it seems is the small message which emerges.

Deborah Moggach relies too much on a rather novelistic kind of coincidence to neaten her plots and sub-plots. Some elements - Christine's naivety, Shamime's upper-class English schooling - are exaggerated in order to fit in with the overall theme of prejudice. Mohammed's prose (in strongly accented English) is in wholehearted agreement with the point of his master and mistress's "kindness", are obviously there in order to restore some balance to the novel's point of view, but they appear crude and unconvincing compared to the other characters' more confident dialogue. Although Moggach constructs some elegant parallels - Imperialism and mole chieftainism; class and caste; materialism and poverty - many of her symbols and most of her jokes are rather obvious. The most successful sections of the book are those which deal with Donald and Christine's provincial background and reminiscences. In the end, though, the main characters stand out too clearly, and refuse to be integrated into their foreign setting.

Pilgrims in the temple of art

By Rosemary Jackson

MARINA WARNER:

The Skating Party
180pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £6.95.
0 297 78113 8

Marina Warner's real skill and interest seem to lie less with story-telling than with iconography, which creates problems for a novel like *The Skating Party*, where narrative is all-potent. Her researches into the Madonna were published in *Alone of the Virgin: Sex, The Myth and Cult of the Virgin Mary* (1976), and the fastidious painting and oriental culture evident throughout her previous writing is still present here, in a reluctance to move away from the visual image. The main female protagonist is Violet, an idealized mother figure - ever-beautiful, attractive, understanding, loving - but the Madonna into a convincing, full-blooded character never quite succeeds.

In the novel's temporal scheme, the "Madonna" has a face of the innumerable after-dinner, dialogue riffs: (Timmo) "I haven't any-

thing interesting to say." (Violet) "Do you think any of us have?"

The Skating Party is neatly structured around flashbacks which give depth and perspective to the characters' present confusion. These assets focus mainly on two episodes: Michael's early historical research into the ceremonial rites of Palau natives, particularly the sacrifice of a young girl, who is starved to death and who survives as a partial mirror image of mistress Katy; and Violet's investigations of forgotten frescoes of the Italian Renaissance. Both these episodes become allegorical - ritualized and pictorialized versions of lives and relationships which betray a tendency to reduce everything to art; and to be indifferent to human suffering as a result. When Violet is forced to witness a brutal confrontation between police and demonstrators during an anti-nuclear protest, she literally buries her head and refuses to admit the truth of what she sees around her: she admits to wanting nothing but the spell of sleep. Similarly, all the knots of kinship tying her to Michael and Timmo are unravelled once they are understood in relation to the frescoes hidden in a self-enclosed chamber, deep in the Vatican.

Given a sardonic control of tone, *The Skating Party* might have read as a self-critical, even self-parodying sat-

ire on aestheticism. For there is a recurrent unease at having pushed out certain unpalatable elements from the picture frame. Unaesthetic issues such as "starvation", "the Bomb", "misled", "the Pill", and "sexual morality" are introduced only through alluded and uncomfortable dialogue, while attempts to reproduce teenage casualness or punkish coyness about sub-cultures and pop music are about as embarrassing as Dickens's depiction of the working class.

In a *Dark Wood*, Marina Warner's first novel, half suggested that literature was a "political act", and Violet voices a guilty awareness that looking on at suffering is not enough.

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SEEKING
AFTER
TRUTH
IDRIES SHAH

With an eye on the weather

By Martin Gilbert

H. G. NICHOLAS (Editor):
Washington Despatches 1941-1945
Weekly Political Reports from the
British Embassy
With an introduction by Isaiah Berlin
700pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
£20.
0 297 77920 6

The publication of documents "in the raw" has recently become an addiction of publishers and editors. There are times when the content of such documents is so thin, or their perspective so partisan, as to serve either no purpose at all, or to act as a distorting mirror in which the history of our times is mis-seen and mis-reflected. This volume is proof, however, that documents as such can serve to enhance our knowledge, and to give a new and valuable perspective of important events which too clever or too intricate a historical analysis may obscure, or miss altogether.

Isaiah Berlin's Washington despatches have long been a subject of historical speculation. Winston Churchill is said to have been an avid reader of them. The despatches themselves were rumoured to have been witty, caustic and indiscreet. In fact, as shown here, they are precise, informative and restrained. Although written amid the pressures and uncertainties of war, they read as easily and as enticingly as any of the more publicly prepared efforts of the Master. For the dominant hand here is indeed Berlin's, even though these despatches were sometimes modified, pruned or added to by others in the Embassy officials, or in Berlin's absence written in their entirety by others, before being sent on from Washington to London, where, it was assumed, their secrecy would be preserved at least until they came within the scope of the then fifty-year rule, in 1995.

The first of the published despatches was written three days after Pearl Harbor, and reports a fascinating fragment that historians have overlooked, that in the days before the Japanese attack which brought America into the war a number of isolationist newspapers, in their attempt to discredit the Administration, had reported "evidence" of an alleged American Government plan for a United States Expeditionary Force of five million men to launch an offensive against Germany in 1943. "The existence of such a plan," Berlin writes, "was not denied by the Administration," which went so far, indeed, through the Secretary of War, to publish an attack on the loyalty and patriotism of those who published information of value to the country's enemies.

As one reads these pages, a different picture emerges of Churchill's wartime influence. It has recently been portrayed on television and in the more skillfully potent histories. Instead of the vindictive ogre of recent portrayals, one has contemporary evidence of the extent of the beneficial influence of Churchill's personality upon even the hardest-fisted critics of British policy. Describing an important off-the-record talk by Churchill at a press luncheon in Washington in September 1943, Berlin reports, on how the Prime Minister spoke with magnificence and gusto and confidence, captured the minds and hearts of his listeners, and professionally sceptical audiences to a degree which, according to some of them, was without parallel. Walter Lippmann had told Berlin of the "irresistible impact and life-giving properties" of Churchill's visit, in contrast to the "stifling atmosphere" of Washington intrigue and gossip, while Raymond Gram Swing, a leading news commentator, added that Churchill's "breadth of vision and generous attitude towards France and Russia, his freedom from petty resentments, and the thrilling effect of his all-embracing and infectious imagination were indeed marks of a very great man."

Yet even Churchill could not stifle, except perhaps momentarily,

the tides of anti-British sentiment which were so frequently the subject of Berlin's reports, and in a despatch written less than two months after the Prime Minister's genuinely successful press conference, Berlin notes that one cause of a recently reported recurrence of anti-British feeling was the shift of national attention away from the war, to post-war problems, first and foremost of which was already in November 1943) the prospect of Anglo-American economic rivalry once the war was won.

The theme of anti-British feeling can be traced from start to finish of these despatches, with an interesting early reflection by Berlin himself, in May 1942, that the strengthening of such hostile sentiment after Pearl Harbor "is partly due to the fact that whereas it was difficult to criticize Britain while the United Kingdom was being bombed, such criticism no longer carries the stigma of isolationist or pro-Nazi sympathies". Individual proponents of anti-British feeling included those two formidable ladies, Madame Chiang Kai-shek and Clare Booth Luce ("returned from the Far East choc-a-bloc with anti-British feelings"), and a general impression in Washington that the British were "too concerned to preserve this bargaining power after the war as well as their prestige as a first-class power". As late as December 1944, Berlin notes that what he calls "indignation" against Britain has given way "to a kind of disgruntled and disenchanted cynicism which says that it was foolish ever to have supposed that the European, and particularly the Russian and British, powers could really have been expected to change their spots."

Such an argument, Berlin adds, "naturally feeds the isolationist tendencies of the waverers and depresses our friends", particularly the main burden of complaint, such as of Montgomery's alleged "passivity", came not from Britain's traditional enemies, "but from our disillusioned friends."

The extent of anti-British feeling is only one of the many themes on which Berlin reports in these despatches. Others presented by the editor, with judicious and wide-ranging eye, include American relations with the Soviet Union, the Polish imbroglio, the Zionist dimension in American politics and, as a corollary, the considerable influence also of non-Zionist Jews, the political struggle of Roosevelt and his administration, and the attitude of the American press to every facet of war policy. In this context it is curious to note that on the eve of the British

Hitting the trail

By Esmond Wright

ELIZABETH DREW:
Portrait of an Election
The 1980 Presidential Campaign
499pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul.
£10.95.
0 7100 9021 8

In a series of fortnightly pieces written between November 1979 and November 1980, Elizabeth Drew for the *New Yorker*, and her co-editor, now put together as *Portrait of an Election*, stand up surprisingly well to a retrospective examination, recalling brilliantly the atmosphere and the uncertainties of the twelve-month campaign. They appear here as fourteen chapters, usually built around one or other of the major candidates: and usually incorporating lengthy interviews with one of the primaries; in June, Miss Drew stands for overall assessments, and the book's strength is essentially its skill in capturing the mood of the moment.

As such, we have here a vivid series of almost camera-like portraits of the key participants. Seen now, however, in retrospect the book gives rise to conclusions that were

General Election of 1945 (pace the *Daily Mirror's* later headline "Whose Finger On the Trigger?", the *Times Herald* represents Mr Churchill in a singularly disagreeable cartoon as inviting a frightened and reluctant Uncle Sam to enter the Third World War", while when the results of the General Election were known, Churchill's defeat "was received with a shock of astonishment that was almost reminiscent of the reactions to the Pearl Harbor bombings").

The reader of this volume will be impressed by the variety of these impressions and the freshness of their presentation. To achieve this effect, the editor, H. G. Nicholas, has had an unenviable task. First he had to locate as many of these despatches as possible, hidden as they were amid some 30,000 war-time files at the Public Record Office in Kew, with no guide as to where they might be found. Then, after he had located some 600,000 words in bulk, he had to reduce it by a half to fit a 700-page book. This reduction, involving the inevitable loss of so much interesting material, has been done with considerable skill, although some scholars may regret the editor's decision to leave out altogether the actual reference numbers to the individual despatches which he did eventually use. Lack of a reference number will prevent these despatches from being seen together with the comments on them, or the use made of them, except by those who are prepared to trouble the editor himself with queries, to set about new the difficult task which he has so triumphantly completed.

In the fifty pages of short biographical sketches at the end of this volume, Professor Nicholas has produced an appendix of considerable help, although there are still quite a number of political references in the text which might usefully have been explained, for the guidance of readers who are not necessarily experts in the intricacies of wartime politics, by additional footnotes on the page.

There is one other unfortunate gap, which struck this reviewer somewhat forebly, but which may well be inevitable. In his lucid introduction, Berlin refers to his first despatch from the United States, in the late summer of 1940, when the reports being sent to America by British press correspondents in the United States seemed to indicate, after the fall of France, "a degree of depression and even defeatism in Britain which was not warranted by the facts", some of which, as Berlin recalls, "seemed to be having a del-

not necessarily apparent during that agonizingly long trial by harassment and exposure. Almost all the candidates were busy for at least one year; John Connally of Texas was on expedition: he pulled out after only six months, at the cost of twelve million dollars and after gaining exactly one Convention delegate. Senator Howie Baker also abandoned the struggle quite early. But in 1979 alone, George Bush spent 329 days on political travel, and he had been busy for three years before that. He may, of course, now see it as well worth while; and it could be argued that Reagan had been involved in the effort ever since he ceased to be Governor of California in 1974. The road to the White House seems now to be long and rocky, to call for remarkable stamina of physique and for almost limitless financial resources.

Moreover, though Miss Drew makes the point mainly by indirect means - for the man in the White House the activity that went into campaigning was at the expense of government itself. By April 1980, though President Carter emerged only rarely from the White House, and was giving press conferences at only eleven-week intervals, half of his congressional liaison officers were out campaigning in various states, the SALT negotiations, suffered as a result, Salesmanship and intrigue, cajolery and blarney look prebend



Franklin D. Roosevelt in conversation with a neighbour at Hyde Park station, November 1930: reproduced from FDR: The Life and Times of Franklin D. Roosevelt by Joseph Alsop (256pp. Thames and Hudson. £10.50. 0 500 01267 9), which will be reviewed in a forthcoming issue.

terious effect on the public opinion of a country of whose goodwill and material aid we stood in desperate need". His first Washington task was to analyse these destructive reports. He did so, providing, it is clear, an analysis which was not only important in itself, but which also made Berlin's own reputation as an analyst, and led after a break to his subsequent work in Washington. Unfortunately, this doubly important despatch is not printed here. Perhaps it has not yet been found amid the myriad files at Kew. Perhaps it has been "weeded". We are not told which. Despite these essentially minor caveats, the book itself must be recognized as of considerable importance. Berlin's skill at catching the

shifts, changes and nuances of American public opinion in every facet of domestic and foreign policy is remarkable, and is done of course without the benefit of hindsight. As a result, this volume will become an essential historical source, offering both the general reader, the student and the scholar an elegantly produced, carefully edited, and highly readable testimony to one man's mastery of the written word. It is not surprising that when the war was over, Churchill sought Berlin's guidance on several aspects of his war memoirs, and that several decades of Oxford undergraduates (including the present reviewer) found the flashes of mental energy a source both of enlightenment, and of fun.

Senator has survived in public life at all.

In this re-telling, President Carter appears to have been remarkably effective, and Mr Reagan remarkably ineffective, in self-projection. Maybe he was the actor in him, but Mr Reagan manages to convey throughout the book a note that is fresh, simple and consistent, even if in the early phases he is not presented sympathetically.

Not the least valuable part of the book is a 100-page appendix, giving us for the first time in print the memos to both party leaders that came to them from Richard Wirthlin, Reagan's pollster, and from Patrick Caddell, Carter's pollster. They are frank and fascinating, and reveal how little is left to chance in the handling of a volatile electorate. Iran as a factor only appears in this book at the end, and Miss Drew appears to minimize its effect throughout the year. It is difficult, to know what anyone could have done about it, but it obviously hurt the man in the White House. A reading of the book, however, suggests that even had there been no hostages, Carter would not have won, since it was inflation and economic questions that were dominant in people's minds. And on these, as on so much else, Carter's sincerity and decency were just not enough. It was not the election of 1980 that led to the aberration in American politics, but that of 1976.

From the manifest to the therapeutic

By Donald Davie

ADRIAN STOKES:
With All the Views
Collected poems.
Edited by Peter Robinson
183pp. Manchester: Carcanet. £8.95.
0 85635 334 5

Some fifty years ago, when Ezra Pound in *The Criterion* applauded Adrian Stokes's *The Quattro Cento*, he exclaimed: "It is almost incomprehensible that any man can have as great a concern for the shapes and meanings of stone beauty as Stokes has, without its forcing him to take the tools in his hands. In fact one can only suppose that he in some way regards himself as the fore-runner of some sort of sculptural amelioration, or at any rate is trying to clear up incomprehensions and to distinguish between pure and mixed sculptural values."

The comment is endearingly characteristic of Pound, who could never make a distinction, not endorse one made by someone else, without at once doing something about it, taking the tools in his hands. But the reflection is a natural one, all the same: if Stokes wasn't himself going to sculpt (as he wasn't), and if he didn't want principally to clean up messy notions about sculpture (as it soon appeared that he didn't), then what was his concern in *The Quattro Cento* (1932), *Stones of Rimini* (1934), and *Colour and Form* (1937)?

It was only incidentally the concern of a judicious historian, distinguishing in a given period the positive or healthful tendency from others that were dubious. And it was not the concern of a critic, if by "critic" we understand someone who discriminates among pleasures so as to sharpen them for himself and others. Although these splendid books did have that effect - and many of us are profoundly grateful for being thus educated by them - that seems not to have been Stokes's motive for writing them. Before long we were to see that he approached his subject not as artist, not as historian, not as critic, but as *chilicla* - and in a strikingly narrow sense.

In the first years after he learned from Melanie Klein to relate his art studies to infantile behaviour, constraining his initial distinction between carving and moulding into allegedly analogous binary oppositions (rough and smooth, aggressive and reparative, inside and outside), his monographs continued to interest, though interest wasn't therapeutic. But it didn't last; for my part, I was soon throwing his books aside with a disappointed yawn. One reason for this was Stokes's prose-style, which had always been what Pound called it: "horrid". (Paterine and yet, as Pound saw, not serving Pater's ends.) Once the prose could not be

checked against particular art-works illustrated or visited, its "wastiness" became tedious. Moreover, whereas one had begun by believing that Melanie Klein's kind of Freudianism need not be reductive, one came to see that it was as reductive as any other kind, when applied to art-works. Even in Stokes's hands art-facts were being explained by being explained away. Predictably, his discourse became interesting to aestheticians and philosophers in proportion as it became boring to artists and artists' publics.

In 1968, when he had only four years to live, Stokes took the tools in his hands. He began writing poems. Since he had plainly been reading poetry and thinking about it for many years before that - he appears to have been one of the very few who read Pound's first *Cantos*, before 1926 - it's natural to suppose that he had been a "closet" or "bottom-drawer" poet while still a young man. But if so, Peter Robinson, the editor of these *Collected Poems*, has found no evidence of it. And on the whole it's charitable to assume that Stokes did indeed start writing verse from scratch, very late in life. For the sad truth is that these 180 poems are almost without exception exasperating and unrewarding. Why should that surprise us? In what other art would one expect to produce interesting work after no apprenticeship, and no practice? And Paterine prose doesn't promise well for verse in any case. The late I. A. Richards is the instance that springs to mind of such a late start on verse; and Richards's poems, though he seems to have worked at them very hard, seldom rise above the level of verbal contraptions. Certainly Stokes's don't. The best short-hand description is "Empsonian" - but that is flagrantly unfair to Sir William Empson, who has consistently demanded in theory, and often enough achieved in practice, just that musical *continuo*, as we follow sentences over line-endings, which in Stokes is conspicuous by its absence. Stokes had no car; and his punctuation - sparse and inconsistent, his syntax therefore mostly indeterminate - suggests that he was quite unaware of any need for musicality.

When Brunelleschi introduced a "musical" sequaciousness into architecture, Stokes was disgusted; but poetry is a sequacious art, as music is and as architecture isn't. These poems are obviously the writings of a very intelligent man; they are strenuous, they are compact - and they are dead, they lie on the page altogether inert. Probably the best is the first of two entitled "At Night", where in the last line the epithets are well-chosen and satisfying:

I turn inward to the quality of sleep
In amiable and coaxing parts
Unbroken pledges that will promise peace.

At the graveside

By Patricia Craig

THOMAS MCCARTHY:
The Sorrow Garden
64pp. Anvil Press. £3.25.
0 85646 082 6

Thomas McCarthy's second collection is dominated by images of gravity and melancholy: snow, death, winter birds, dusk, clouded pools, grey rain-water, "places / Where the dead had grown: the sorrow-garden". The excellent title poem is lament for the poet's father, whose grave needs to be continually filled, the soil collapsing inwards stands for "irreversible loss". Against this, we find moments of personal felicity (as in "A Wedding by the Sea"), picturesque recollections, and scenes from the past: Ireland's past, occasionally, as well as the author's. Imaginatively reconstructed.

The book begins with "The Poet

This ends a poem that, like the early prose one is so grateful for, attempts to articulate the precise quality of sensuous experience - in this case, auditory: the sound of suburban electric trains at night. But the sensuous experience is not stunted, so as to be delighted in; it is enlisted in the service of some sort of model or diagram:

These passing links of sound change to an upright thread
Scar in joints and spokes that square the firmament
As if many heterogeneous towns could make a theme . . .

Here the model constructed - something to do with human solidarity conceived of as discontinuous inter-linkings - is at all events consoling, "amiable". But this is exceptional. And indeed just this is what is most disheartening - how little comfort Stokes finds. For Pound in *extremis*, in *The Plain Cantos*, was stayed and again by what the young Stokes so compellingly purveyed - a well-kept, a coldly worked marble, some emblem out of Renaissance Rimini or Venice or Urbino, figurative or not. In either case magnificently enhanced by what Stokes first perceived and named as stone-bloom or stone-blossom (lichen and weathering and the soft attrition of human hands), the artifact splendidly expressive but not self-expressive, all outward, all - Stokes's own word - manifest. And yet it turns out that when Stokes was at *extremis* (there are eighteen poems here from when he knew himself under death-sentence from cancer), such emblems comforted him not at all, nor did he turn to them so that they should.

What had happened to him, that he did not have recourse to the consolations he had himself provided?

In 1973, a few months after Stokes's death, a collection of his poems appeared in *Penguin Modern Poets 23*, along with collections by

By rage inspired

By Bedwyr Lewis Jones

ROBERT WILLIAMS PARRY:
Cerdid
Edited and with an Introduction by
Sir Thomas Parry
136pp. Newton, Powys: Gregynog.
£112.

Almost fifty years ago, in the halcyon days of private printing presses in Britain, the Gregynog Press loved Robert Williams Parry to submit a selection of his poems for publication. The press had already brought out a fine collection of T. Gwynne Jones. It was only natural that it should wish to add Gwynne Jones's peer among Welsh poets to its list of

Welsh authors but Parry accepted the invitation and then withdrew. Thus it was inevitable that when the Gregynog Press was recently resurrected, the time through institutional and public rather than private munificence, Parry's poems should be its first major Welsh language item.

The new *Cerdid* is a very different product from the aborted 1933 project. E. G. Jones, the present printer, is more expansive in page size and layout than was his predecessor Robert Ashwin Maynard; his typeset is 14 point Monotype Baskerville. The content is also markedly different. A volume of pre-1933 Parry would have been a partial and one-sided presentation of a major poet. It would have resembled a selection of Yeats before the Easter Rising; for the Welsh author, too, experienced a revolutionary change in his middle years.

Williams Parry established his reputation with the sonnets which he wrote during his exile in an army camp at Winchester; sonnets which are sonorous and majestic, full of longing and melancholic doubt. He consolidated it in the 1920s with a series of lyrics which capture the pristine loveliness of the outdoor scene in images which are cleansing and fresh but which are at the same time charged with a chilling awareness of transience and decay. Then came the change.

A misunderstanding about his lecturing convinced Parry that the university in which he was employed was flippant in its attitude towards literature, and especially towards the literature of Wales. In protest he embarked on a one-man critique. He vowed not to publish either poetry or criticism any more. The Gregynog volume was withdrawn. The poet's dissatisfaction continued to burn and when in 1936 his comrade Sandeford Lewis was dismissed by the same university for leading the first direct action in modern times on behalf of a Welsh political cause, Parry's anger burst. A spate of poems flowed, in-

Geoffrey Grigson and Edwin Muir. These poems have been reprinted by Robinson who has, however, working from the manuscripts, allowed himself liberties beyond the usual norms of editorial propriety. For instance it seems that poems which Stokes had unequivocally cancelled in the manuscripts are none the less salvaged into print. Since the poems are not much good anyway, this hardly matters very much. Still, Stokes was a distinguished individual, and if this unsatisfactory side of his activities was to be recorded, it should have been done properly - with some regard for the author's intentions, so far as these can be determined from what was obviously a very disordered set of manuscripts. The sad truth is that we have not read for into this book before we have lost confidence that on any page of it we are reading what Stokes would have wanted us to read.

Robinson opines that poetry is "a form which, when articulated fully, is more conceptually substantial than prose." A resounding declaration; but what does "conceptually substantial" mean? And as for "articulated fully", the English of Stokes's verse is, as I have remarked, articulated very sparsely indeed, and very approximately. Robinson's prose is similarly rough-and-ready; and he shares with his poet a lordly disregard for the niceties and indeed the necessities of English accidence and syntax. Moreover either he or his publisher has skimmed proof-reading so that of twenty-five famous words quoted from Mallarmé's *Cris de Vents* no less than four are wrong. It is not really surprising that when Robinson offers, bravely enough, to explain a Stokes poem, "Weathering", what he puts before us is rather outrageous special pleading.

The "terrible" poems of the poet's winter of discontent as well as the early sonnets and lyrics are almost all included in this new limited edition, selected and arranged by his cousin, Sir Thomas Parry. The editor has been justifiably harsh on the poet's pre-1917 and post-1941 work and on his occasional pieces. He has been too harsh on the elegiac quatrains; those have in them the quality and concentration of Greek epigram. One misses the 1929 lyric "Summer". But then the volume is meant to satisfy by its presentation rather than by its choice. And it succeeds.

Six wood engravings by Peter Reddish add to its appeal. These tone in well with Parry's early nature poems. One in particular, showing two curlews flying upward over mountain moorland, is full of atmosphere. But I am not altogether happy about the positioning of the illustrations. They have been used by the editor as dividers between groupings of poems rather than integrated into a unified composition. It is the one blemish on a finely produced book.

The volume is a fitting accolade to a major poet, Williams Parry himself, could he see it, would be pleased and more than a little bemused. The resurrected Gregynog Press is now owned by the same University of Wales that once caused his withdrawal and stirred his rage.

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commentary

Victorian Pantheon

By Bruce Boucher

The Cast Courts
Victoria and Albert Museum

"The boldness of the idea, the height of the apartments, the magnitude of many objects... and the beauty of others, all concur to produce a lasting effect." Thus *The Builder* greeted the opening of the Cast Courts of the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1873. Considering the chequered history of the rooms and their contents over the past century, the reopening of the West Court is an equally remarkable event.

The gilded spirits behind the Museum of Manufactures, the early title of the V & A, were in no doubt as to the utility of casts to improve contemporary standards of design. Consequently, they took great pains in amalgamating, purchasing, and commissioning copies of objects as diverse as Trajan's Column, the tomb of St Sebaldus in Nuremberg, and the Pórtico de La Gloria from Santiago de Compostela. Yet, in a matter of fifty years, the Courts changed from a repository of all that was best in European art, to a depository of white elephants. Travel, photography, and the Modern Movement effected a sea-change in public taste, and it was only with great difficulty that the then director, Sir Eric Maclagen, managed to save the casts and electotypes from dispersal in 1928.

Fortunately, the Cast Courts have survived their opponents and decades of neglect to re-emerge as a triumphant example of High Victorian taste. Anthony Radcliffe and his staff in the Museum's Department of Sculpture have conducted a sympathetic restoration of the West Court, bringing back its maroon and viridian colours, and assemblage of casts, much as they would have looked in 1873. But the value of the restoration goes far beyond that. The destruction of other collections has enhanced the value of the V & A's casts while the vicissitudes of time have destroyed many originals which can now only be fully appreciated in copies. Thus, it is still possible to admire the twelfth-century tympanum of Shobdon Church or the lost relief of Christ and the apostles from Lübeck in the mid-nineteenth-century copies of the West Court.

The documentary value of the V & A's casts is unquestionable, but the Cast Courts are probably even more significant for the insight they give us into the Victorian mentality. Entering those lofty rooms is like stepping into a Victorian Pantheon of design and technology. No one could fail to be impressed by the full-scale replica of the Pórtico de La

Gloria or the Rosslyn Chapel, nor can one forget the part that works like these or the St Sebaldus tomb played in the development of Victorian ornamentation. The juxtaposition of objects from Spain and Scandinavia, from Italy and Germany, often seems bizarre, but the placement of bronze doors from Pisa and Hildesheim or fountains from Winchester and East Meon encourages a comparative study of design.

The display of casts is also complemented by a small sampling of nineteenth-century fakes by the legendary Bastianini and others. One can only hope that more of them will be put on display and that the second Cast Court will reopen in the near future.

The display of casts is also complemented by a small sampling of nineteenth-century fakes by the legendary Bastianini and others. One can only hope that more of them will be put on display and that the second Cast Court will reopen in the near future.

"Chute at a Drinking Place in the Campagna", 1854, by George Henning Mason, ARA, (1818-72). Mason was born in Fenton Park in the Poles, a member of the Mason's pottery family; he was brought up at Wesley Rocks in rural North Staffordshire, and left England to seek his fortune in Italy. There he met Frederick (later Lord) Leighton and Giovanni Costa, who were to become close friends. On his return to England in 1857, he produced many idyllic interpretations of the Staffordshire and Derbyshire countryside. His influential patrons included the Duke of Westminster and Lord Leighton, but he died too soon to build on the popularity of his large painting, "The Harvest Moon" (Tate Gallery). His "Girls Dancing at Pastoral Symphony" figured in the Arts Council's exhibition "Great Victorian Pictures" in 1978. About fifty of Mason's paintings, together with related and biographical material, are brought together in the first major exhibition of his work for a century. It opens at the City Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent (May 1-June 12) and then tours to the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool (June 26-July 31) and the Fine Art Society Ltd, London (August 9-September 4).

From spouting to solipsism

By David Nokes

The Marvellous Boy
Bristol New Vic

Thomas Chatterton was the Romantic movement's lost leader. Wordsworth's tribute to "the marvellous boy," the sleepless soul that perished in his pride" is by no means the only, or most extravagant, of the homages paid by later Romantics to this first martyr in their cause. "The purest English," declared Keats, "is Chatterton's." His lowly birth, his solitude, his obsession with Gothic romance and his suicide made him a hero of the new sensibility. His sleepless soul received its apotheosis in Waller's famous picture, "The Death of Chatterton," which has been the subject of many productions.

John Fletcher's play at the Bristol New Vic examines these received images of Chatterton from a different and specifically local perspective. Chatterton was born and grew up in Bristol. His father taught in the school of St Mary Redcliffe, where the poet later claimed to discover the ancient manuscript of the Rowley poems. Bristol in the 1700s was a large, bustling commercial centre, very different from Nether Stowey or Glastonbury, and Chatterton's first poems were urban satires in the vein of Pope and Gay. Fletcher introduces him at the "Spouters Club," the haunt of idle prentices and would-be wits, railing at the "servile avaricious trade" of his native city. "Spouting" takes up much of the first half of the play. Fletcher has worked hard to create an idiom for these satirical ex-

Shadows and whispers

By Frances Spalding

Prunella Clough: New Paintings
1979-82
Warwick Arts Trust

Prunella Clough once dealt with swart, producing tough, sinewy images of the industrial landscape. Three decades on, her spare, elegant and more cerebral response to an urban wasteland. They allude to stained or peeling walls, packed gates or tangled wire. One series, with rare explicitness, focuses on a

discarded industrial glove found in a factory yard. Instead of actual labour and mechanistic clutter, she now relies on traces and fragments that hint at past activity.

In her early canvases the factory workers and lorry drivers are locked into position with their machinery. Some of these, compact and terse in design, can be found in a back room at the Warwick Arts Trust. But where they catch attention with their harsh forcefulness, the recent paintings filling the gallery hold the mind in a different way: they are deliberately more spacious and yield a more contemplative terrain. Clough explores the infinite space that a flat canvas can suggest by use of textured grounds, some mottled and flecked

like silk or fur, others suggesting transparent curtains. Within this indeterminate space hover sharp accents - a tangle of lines or a note of strong colour. Others cling to the edge of the canvas, stretching the eye across its width and height. In one of the "Mesh" series, loose calligraphic marks unfold like pliant, chant across the filmy ground. The line saunters with a nonchalance that disguises the artist's keen sense of interval.

Clough's "Gate" series instances the more conceptual stance of her recent work. Photographs of factory gates taken by the artist as "approximate aids" are reproduced in the catalogue. Perhaps only the central cross bar will be used in the actual painting where it is combined with diagrammatic lines, reminding us of entrances indicated on a ground plan. By combining knowledge and perception, she can suggest in "Small Gate Painting VIII" both barrier and movement through.

The catalogue (28pp, £1.75) contains a valuable interview between the artist and Bryan Robertson. In this Clough admits to the vast discrepancy between the rawness of her original experience and her neatly tailored paintings; the reduction of an overloaded urban context to a cracked arabesque and hint of rust. One suspects that at some point in the 1960s her preoccupation with her subject became merely a peg on which to hang her overriding interest in art. In the catalogue she recalls the exhilaration and difficulties presented by the first sight of a Donald Judd or Sol Lewitt, because minimalist art, with its paradoxical absence of art content, broke with the rules that her painting upheld. But if the conceptual richness of minimalist art depends on an understanding of its convoluted theory, Clough's abstracts can be appreciated on their visual strength alone. They may play a familiar game but they achieve a tough elegance.

Their process is one of detachment and control, qualities at odds with her interest in urban chaos. When recently she decided to reintroduce the figure in her "Subway" series, it was not in any substantial form but as a transient shadow or reflection on the tiled walls. Some of these shadows create silver shapes like empty speech balloons, reducing the human presence to a ghostly whisper. The exhibition continues until May 14 and is complemented by a show of Prunella Clough's drawings at the New Art Centre, Scone Street.

LTP: Journal of Literature Teaching Politics, discussed by Robert Howson in "Behind the lines" (April 16), may be obtained from LTP, c/o Andrew Belsey, Dept of Philosophy, University College, Cardiff CF1.

HITCHCOCK THE MURDEROUS GAZE William Rothman

Hitchcock's subject is violence - but through his camera's eye he is as murderous as the look he gives back at the camera and at us - and his ramifications extend beyond the popular tag of Hitchcock as 'Master of Suspense' to the larger mysteries of murder and love. In this fascinating and challenging book, William Rothman offers a close analysis of five most memorable Hitchcock films and documents his arguments. The films examined are *The Lodger* (1928), *Murder! Psycho* (1980).

Rothman's insights sharpen our perception of Hitchcock's genius, his mastery of suspense, and in this book, will ever view a Hitchcock film with new eyes.

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Our essential humanity

By Wilfrid Mellers

Agrippina
Sadlers Wells

Time was, not all that long ago, when baroque opera was considered unfathomable in our modern world, for reasons that are not entirely invalid. For the point of Baroque Opera was to glorify Man in the Highest: to claim that we are gods (or possibly monsters), subject only to the limitations of human fallibility and mortality. The limitations are, of course, crucial; god-pretending, we none the less commit petty peccadillos and crimes; and, alas, we grow old and die. In the twentieth century, however, it's often seemed that we're aware only of our human limitations; fear dominates us, and we've lost pride in our humanity. We can't walk, let alone dance and sing, like kings and queens; this is a severe disability in attempting to perform baroque operas.

But if we're heirs to a greyly industrialized democracy we're also, nowadays, in strong reaction against it: which may be one reason why over the past decade baroque opera has become a fashionable cult. We still can't take it quite straight: though we respond to its extravagant passions, its pretentiousness may provoke the uneasy giggle. *Agrippina*, however, presented to a crowded house at Sadlers Wells by Kent Opera, lends itself to acceptable compromise, for three reasons. First, it is by Handel, a composer of genius who, like most geniuses, seldom keeps to the rules, so that all his heroic operas are in this, the basic conventional, private recognition of public conventions, private recognition of "other modes of experience" that may be possible. Secondly, the central character is a woman, motivated by female instinct rather than by male will. And thirdly the piece itself, a product of Handel's early years in Italy, is not a fully fledged

opera seria, but something of a hybrid, harking back to the court entertainments of the seventeenth century, as practised by Monteverdi and Cavalli. What were to become the traditional heroic themes coexist, in *Agrippina*, with social comedy, even satire; and when the baroque world laughs at itself, we are to some degree excused from embarrassment.

There remains, however, the tricky question as to how much the heroic world laughed at itself, and in what ways. The evidence of Handel's music doesn't suggest to me that the Emperor Claudius was meant to be presented, as he is in this production, merely as a pompous buffoon. His first aria, in which he declares his love for Poppea, is grandly heart-rending in its magnificence, and I cannot believe that the undulating cello obbligato, swelling (and subsiding) in desire, should also be used to provoke demeaning pratfalls. Admittedly, the aria is soon followed by comic reversals: which are none the less compatible with human dignity. Handel's humane point is surely that his contradictions are not his essential humanity. At one level Claudius's pretence to divinity is to be taken seriously; the part was written for a celebrated bass with an immense range, and shouldn't strike us as primarily comic but rather as at once noble and pathetic - glorious and vainglorious. David Thomas makes a fair showing at this when the production lets him; too often, however, the producers take the easy way out, giving the conventions we can't believe in. Taking the mickey out of a *capo* by making the bystanders register boredom or exasperation may work once, but not twice or thrice. Even in an open as ambiguously heroic as this, the basic conventional assumptions about human behaviour which we have to accept if the work is to convince not merely on its own terms, but on ours also. The present may find in the past what it needs; but is likely to find only dust and ashes if it doesn't start from a decent respect.

This dubiety of intention com-

municates itself to the musical performance. It works best with the women who, unlike the men in baroque opera, happily don't need to be emasculated and dehumanized in order to assert their heroic dominance. *Agrippina*, as Handel presents her, is a whole of a part, being simultaneously matriarchal virago, serpentine schemer and luxurious sewer; the contradictions here form a warp and wool of human flesh and blood, which Felicity Palmer brilliantly encompasses. Mary Dwyer as Poppea is also live on the mark, combining the open-eyed seductiveness of a Marilyn Monroe with sharp-edged vivacity. We can see as well as hear why everyone falls for her, until she is enmeshed in political chicanery about which she knows little and cares less. Her impeccably controlled coloratura catches this precisely; she whirls through her arabesques with a cherubic triumph that thinly covers nervous apprehension. Cynthia Buchanan as the adolescent Nero veers too far, like David Thomas's Claudius, towards caricature; her note of peevish asperity is sometimes on target but grows tiresome through over-exploitation. The minor characters, notably Narciso and Pallante, are deftly etched by Christopher Robson and Glyn Davenport, and in their case there is no doubt that Handel glosses their corrupt cynicism satirically. The one unequivocally "good" character, Ottone, provides a moral yardstick by which to adjudicate between human fallibilities. Unjustly accused of treachery, he's a victim and is given, in his distress, the opera's only accompanied aria. In this Paul Esswood uses his noble voice nobly, with his habitual command of line and nuance.

Perhaps, in the context of this production, he sounds a bit too dignified. In any case the counter-tenor voice may not be appropriate for the part, which Handel wrote not for a castrato but a woman. In this fact lurk ambiguities aplenty: it's as though Handel were saying that a godly good man ought to be larger

than life and free of the contagion of the flesh, yet couldn't bring himself to achieve this the hard way. So he compromises on a woman simulating a man; obviously different (and higher) in range and sonority, yet more palpably human than a trumpet-like castrato. Beautifully though Esswood sings, a woman's earthier timbre might make Ottone's dismay more tellingly immediate.

Ultimately the deficiencies of this production centre in the orchestral pit, where dubiety of intention is both fundamental and avert. The band, under Ivor Fischer, makes an agreeably tart sonority, but is painfully lacking in rhythmic stability and momentum. Tasi basic tempi tend to be too sprightly in fast numbers, too sluggish in slow ones, wouldn't matter if there were an underlying pulse; what vitiates all is the conductor's meanderingly unsteady rubato. I've an uneasy suspicion that this is done deliberately, in the interests of Authenticity: it is supposed to reveal that Handel's characters, far from being the stereotypes they used to be dismissed as, are human creatures activated by the vagaries of real passions, here and now. In effect it does the opposite. All music, and baroque music most of all, makes sense through pulse and rhythm: which condition melodic shape and harmonic progression as well as the pace of movement itself. Handel's people are indeed profoundly human: their humanity is incarnate in the ways they live, breathe, talk and walk. To deprive them of their inner momentum and equilibrium is to underwrite them from their essential being. We see again that dignity and irony may be compatible, and in Handel must be. Both the conductor and the producers might take a hint from Roger Bullin's beautiful set, which effects ironic marvels of emotional metaphor by the faintest touch - such as the mini-fountain that turns ceremonial court into gallant garden; a *hortus conclusus* wherein not only a good man as scapegoat but even the craftiest courtier might glimpse the possibility of redemption.

New Oxford books: History

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Norman Housley

This is the first detailed account of crusades launched by the popes against Christian lay powers. The author enlivens the principal aspects of these expeditions: their theoretical justification, their place in papal crusading, preaching, recruitment, and finance. He concludes that the campaign should be regarded not as a debasement of the crusade ideal, as previous historians have claimed, but as an integral and important part of the crusading movement. £17.50

The Hebrew Letters of Prester John

Edward Ullendorff and C.F. Beckingham

This book presents a critically edited text of the three Hebrew letters of Prester John as far as discovered, and an annotated translation. Such an edition has not been attempted before. There is also a brief discussion of the historical background of the Prester John myths and a full listing of themes and motifs. £12 School of Oriental and African Studies

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This is a corrected paperback reprint of the book first published in 1978. The editors, contributors, and publishers of this volume are to be congratulated on a first-rate achievement... an excellent volume. History. Paperback £9.95 8 May

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Wales 1880-1980
Kenneth O. Morgan

First published in 1980, and now available in paperback, this book was described in *The TLS* as "a crowning achievement", and in *The Guardian* as "a landmark in historical debate for a generation". It finally sets the years of Liberal ascendancy, the depression, Labour ascendancy, and the Welsh and Anglo-Welsh from 1914 to 1945, and the economic regeneration, social and cultural changes, and some of political nationalism that have developed since 1945. £4.95 Oxford Paperbacks 20 May

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remainders

By Eric Korn

This month's revelations concern the virtually unimportant figure of Opal Stanley Whiteley, who published nature prose-poems of buttock-wrenching archness: "The lily is a yellow lily and it floats upon the water. It does float upon the water like a little sky-star. Maybe it was a little one that did have longings to cuddle in among the raindrops that do come together in the pond." She appeared in 1919 in the offices of the *Atlantic Monthly*, and sufficiently impressed or imposed on Ellery Sedgwick that he gave her an office in which, over the course of the next few months, she laboriously reassembled thousands of torn up scraps of paper, allegedly a diary kept by her in the age of five or six in the woods of Oregon, and ripped up by a jealous sister - or foster-sister, for Opal believed herself to be a founding of mysterious origin. No one, it seemed, was more surprised than Opal when a list of French bird-names taught her by her real, her "angel-father" was observed to spell out "Robert François Philippe Ferdinand D'Orléans". Opal's book was published, achieved a brief success in America and in England (where it was powered by a preface by Viscount Grey of Falloden) and she began giving herself, in an agreeably unassuming manner, the airs of a Princess and a Pretender. This annoyed the families of Orléans and Oregon in equal measure. E. S. Bradburne, in *Opal Whiteley, The Unsolved Mystery* (1962) reserves judgement, but is sufficiently sceptical for the TLS reviewer of the day to head his paragraph "Psychopath?"

What I have here is a copy of *The Fairland Around Us* (Los Angeles 1918), the book which Opal published at her own expense - there was a story of brutal ill-treatment by the printers - and brought to Ellery Sedgwick, who found it too much even for him. One's sympathies are with the printers, for it is lavishly extra-illustrated with large numbers of colour plates snipped from various encyclopaedias of natural history, and captioned boldly in Indian ink. Some of the illustrations are backed with bits of Opal's own smudgy photographs with captions like "Giving the pledge of friendship to tree fairies." They are all fairies to Opal Whiteley, play fairies, toad fairies and stinkhorn mushroom fairies. The book is bound in a green suede with the texture of damp loam, and contains on the last leaf an "Announcement of books by same author to be published at later date". There are a dozen items, including *Twilight and then Night, Raindrop's Journey, Aurelius' Evangel in Search of the Joyous Blue and Wayside Fairies*.

Exhibit B is more pathetic. It is a copy of W. H. Hudson's *Book of a Naturalist*, presented to Opal Whiteley by Pamela Glenconner, Viscountess Grey of Falloden. The annotations - odd, nonrandom underlinings, a chapter where the word "pines" has been written in the margin a dozen times - suggest some kind of obsessional mania. The letters of the words of Pamela Glenconner's inscription have been counted, assigned values, added and rendered. All too easily can one see this child of fantasy compiling in adolescence the diary of the lost princess she wanted to be and herself, perhaps, tearing it into scraps. Yet there is independent evidence, of unknown value, that she did keep a diary as a child. And perhaps the heirs of lost kingdoms walk incognito among us.

You've probably had enough of what Holshede calls "images of sore and terrible countenances, all armed in curious works of argentine", so you won't mind if I go on about Thomas Hall's treatise against long hair, and the commendatory verse signed "A.M." My little Marvell turned out to be something less than a nine days' wonder, exciting a whirlwind of indifference. I am still waiting for the definitive dismissive missive, doubtless this very moment being penned in some distant academic literature: "I have thought that the Hall canon was so long ago exposed, if Mr Korn really unfamiliar with the most convincing refutation of his attribution in *Skrifter fra den Kongelige Haandskriftsamling i Kopenhamn*." I am obliged by Mr Lehmann's kind words but not convinced that a posthumous portrait of Marvell, published in 1681, showing him with long hair, proves that he might not have written an epigram (epigrammatists are not on oath) in a different sense, at another place, at another age, under another régime. The Restoration was also a half-

restorer. Or as a recent correspondent suggests, Marvell's hair in 1681 may have been wiggish.

Or Whiggish. On the precise meaning of which at the turn of the eighteenth century depends another hotly debated issue, the precise date of the first recorded of the drinking songs with which the men of Brasenose College, Oxford (and doubtless the women too) launch their annual mardigras-like festivities, before settling down to the rigorous business of supping themselves into a stupor. See *Brasenose Ale. A collection of Verses annually presented on Shrove Tuesday by the Butler of Brasenose College*. (Privately Printed, Boston, Lincolnshire 1878): Then in true English Liquor, my masters, begin Six go-downs upon rep. to our true English King, In this orthodox health let each man keep his station, For a Whig will conform upon such an occasion.

The editor, while sticking to the date of 1705 or thereabouts does point out that there wasn't anyone around at the time you could call both English and a king, and puts the whole thing down to Jacobitism. But the exiles of the 1680s, who opposed the Duke of York, were also Whigs. The other words present no difficulty. "Rep" is a kind of corded fabric, or else a worthless fiddle, while a "go-down" is of course (sometimes subterranean) storehouse in India and parts of Eastern Asia. More interesting is the second recorded ale-chanty:

O may my verse be strong and clear To spread in glory wide Not windy like to bottled beer Or grip-compelling cyder lines you would hardly recognize as coming from the sobered pen of Reginald Heber, he of the spiky breezes and the icy mountains. ("The only brews that Heber cares for," they used to jest, "are he-brews.") I would have offered a bottle of audit ale for anyone knowing that, but my last challenge gleamed but a single response. I asked for rhyming titles and authors, along the lines of *The Ill-Made Knight*, by T. H. White, *The Wandering Jew*, by Eugene Sue, *The Sorrows of Werther* (Goethe) and, obscure, *Marie Agathe* by Mrs John Lane, *There's Rosemary, There's Rue*, by Lady Fortescue, *The Flame and the Rose*, by Helena

Grose, and - my favourite of all for its air of despondent inevitability - *How to Examine the Chest* by Samuel West (Late Physician to the City of London Hospital for Diseases of the Chest, Victoria Park). My sole reply offered, quite admirably, *Spleen* by Matthew Green; and then with an increasing defiance of propriety, *King Lear* by William Shakespeare, *Aphra Behn's Poetical Remains*, *Collected Poems* by Oliver Wendell Holmes and, outrageously, *Wars I Have Seen* by Gertrude Stein, which is almost as bad as my own *The Silver Tassie*, by Sean O'Casey. Nonetheless, the due meed of success from Dew Mead Bottling Co of Hamilton will soon be on its way to Anthony Thwaite, who is of course known as the author of *Poems on the Victorian Great*, the travel books *Pomegranate and Date* and *The Sukiyaki Cune Latte*, and a study of the role of the Arts Council *Hind It Out on a plate or make 'em wait: Can poets create with the aid of the State? Notes on the Great Debate*.

But it is his conclusions that have especial relevance to today's concerns. British literature is unclear because, historically, of "the demands of the coarse, vulgar, illiterate aristocracy", while the comparative purity of American literature is due "in great measure, to the noble womanhood of our country that is influencing our speech and literature by voice and pen in so many different ways." So watch it, Erica. (Erica Jong, that is.)

And lastly, this from *The Voyage of the Beagle*, in commemoration of the centenary of Charles Darwin's death on April 19:

After the possession of these miserable islands had been contested by France, Spain, and England, they were left uninhabited. The Government of Buenos Ayres had sold them to a private individual, but likewise used them as old Spain had done before, for a penal settlement. England claimed her right and seized them. The Englishman who was left in charge of the flog was consequently murdered. A British officer was sent, unsupported by any power, and when we arrived, we found him in charge of a population, of which rather more than half were runaway rebels and murderers.

The theatre is worthy of the scenes acted on it. An undulating land, with a desolate and wretched aspect.

Author, Author

Competition No 68

Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they reach this office no later than May 21. A prize of £10 is offered for the first correct set of answers to be opened, or failing that, the most nearly correct - in which case inspired guesswork will also be taken into consideration.

Entries, marked "Author, Author" on the envelope, should be addressed to the Editor, *Times Literary Supplement*, PO Box 7, New Printing House Square, Oray's Inn Road, London WC1X 9EZ. The solution and results will appear on May 28.

1 MAY you find in these leaves of my writlog, what Robinson Crusoe found in his experience on the desert island - namely, "something to comfort yourselves from, and to set in the Description of Good and Evil, on the Credit Side of the Account." - Farewell!

2 Even a dismal book like Robinson Crusoe, so unreadable as a whole that few people even know that the second part exists, becomes interesting when it describes Crusoe's efforts to make a table, glaze earthenware and grow a patch of wheat.

3 I am going to write it as simply as I can. And the autobiography of Robinson Crusoe. And she has and this is it.

Competition No 64

There were no correct solutions. Answers: 1 "Take care of him, He best Charles Dickens, David Copperfield, chapter 5. 2 Me a vast awful bulldog, black and brown. Completely terrified, who near the town, As calves, perceiving trembling red, So did my calves the approaching monster feel. Edward Lear, "Eclogue".

3 But I remember now, that I am always surprised, always surprised By the bull-dog in the Burlington Arcade. T. S. Eliot, *The Family Reunion*, II, 3.

Writers who live, work or study in any of the thirty-two London boroughs or the City of London are invited to submit entries for the 1982 Wandsworth All-London Literary Competition. The Competition is in two classes, Poetry and Short Story, with prizes in each class of £100, £150, and £75. Closing date will be June 25. The judges will be Oavin Ewart, Elizabeth Jennings and John Mole. For Poetry, William Cooper, Margaret Duffy and Ann Schiller for Short Story. Entry forms are available from all London borough libraries, or from Wandsworth Literary Competition, Bakers' District Library, 265 Lavender Hill, SW11.

'The White Hotel'

Sir - Following D. A. Kenrick's letter (March 26) attacking my novel, and the replies from myself and James Fenton (April 2), three letters have appeared, on two successive weeks, which do not address themselves to these replies, but seem to wish to unleash aggression. It is the tone of these letters, rather than their substance, which perturbs and depresses me, and prompts me to reply once more.

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D. C. DAMANT, 16 Orchard Street, Cambridge.

'No Alternative'

Sir - J. L. Houlden advances some curious arguments in his review (April 9) of our book *No Alternative*, not least that the Book of Common Prayer ought to have eroded the critical faculties of our contributors, whose language is said to be "strident" and whose views suffer from "one-sidedness" and "wild mockery". Quite apart from the fact that tone of language is no criterion for judging the truth of what is being expressed - though Mr Houlden might like to look again at Jesus's words to those other "blind guides" in Matthew, 23 - he should not be assumed to know what we set out to criticize. The *Alternative Service Book* we were obliged to use only the pusillanimous type of proseology to be found therein.

Secondly, he says that we "do not live in an age of literary discrimination". We may assume that Mr Houlden, as an ex-member of the Liturgical Commission, knows about such things. However, that argument provides no excuse for seeing to it that such discrimination as still exists should be further lessened by the provision of new texts which are themselves sub-literary. Much of the blame for the lack of acquaintance of the general public with the Prayer Book must be imputed to the Liturgical Commission itself which has done its best these last twenty years to make sure that the Prayer Book has been well buried beneath a welter of revisionary pamphlets. It is ironic that a generation which prides itself on its literacy should have lost its familiarity with the sacred texts of our civilization. Mr Houlden thinks that this loss should not be regretted but welcomed.

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D. C. DAMANT, 16 Orchard Street, Cambridge.

'From Bauhaus to Our House'

Sir - Speaking as a native Anglophone, I was rather confused by Blake Morrison's review of *From Bauhaus to Our House* by Tom Wolfe (March 26). I quote: "There are also the mistakes and false emphases, which even the amateur of modern architecture can't help but notice: Simone Rodia (the architect of the Towers of Watts) instead of Simon Rodilla. The identity of the latter is unknown in Southern California, unless she was an understudy for Carmen Miranda in a Hollywood B movie of the 1940s."

BARBARA COFFEY, 47 Rupert Street, London W1.

Literature and Consumer Law

Sir - "A publisher is responsible for the truth of a book he publishes in his non-fiction list." That is the sweeping conclusion drawn in a report in the *Sunday Times* following a successful claim by an Oxford scientist against the OUP publishers of *His Image: The Closing of a Man*, in which the author had made extensive use of Dr Bromham's own researches to lend an air of authority to an apparently fraudulent story.

But can that conclusion be sustained? The essence of the case as reported seems to be that Dr Bromham's reputation had been sullied by unauthorized association with a spoof, and only incidentally that he was able to extract from the publisher an admission that the work was a hoax.

Supposing that no one could claim injury arising out of the publication of who then would feel strongly enough to challenge its authenticity in the courts? A prosecution might be

Wichmann's book

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HUGH HONOUR, Tofori, Lucca, Italy.

Fracastorius

Sir - In your symposium on plagiarism (April 9), Pat Rogers says, of Fracastorius, "whoever he may be". To rescue from oblivion a man who invented a name now current in most languages of the world: Girolamo Fracastoro was a Venetian doctor (1478-1553), who was not only a precursor of palaeontological science, but also wrote a short poem entitled *Syphills sive de morbo gallico*, the eponymous hero of which describes the disease then recently brought back to Europe by the sailors of Columbus's fleet. Pope's reference, however, is to Fracastoro's *Naugur*, a dialogue on poetics.

F. HURDIS-JONES, 35 Square Marguerite, 1040 Brussels.

Scarifying

Sir - Such a good poet as Ion Silkin, sensitive to words as he has shown himself to be, ought not to make the error, increasingly common among journalists, of imagining that "scarify" has something to do with "scarce", and that "scarifying" therefore means "frightening" (Commentary, April 16). To scarify is to scratch, cut, make scars in the surface of the skin or in some other very break up a surface. The Book of Leviticus forbids flumin beings to do it to themselves, as they once did in some cultures as an act of ritual mourning.

DAVID DAICHES, 9 Randolph Crescent, Edinburgh.

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Among this week's contributors

DAVID BAIN'S *Masters, Servants and Orders in Creek Tragedy: A Study of Some Aspects of Dramatic Technique and Convention* will be published shortly.

SEMON BLACKBURN is the author of *Reason and Prediction*, 1972.

BRUCE BOUCHER is a lecturer in the History of Art at University College London.

JOHN BUXTON is Reader Emeritus in English Literature at the University of Oxford. His books include *Elizabethan Taste*, 1963.

VALENTINE CUNNINGHAM is the editor of *The Penguin Book of Spanish Civil War Verse*, 1980.

DONALD DAVIS's most recent collection of poems is *In the Shopping Trian*, 1977.

FILIPPO DOMINI was formerly Director of the Italian Institute in London.

RICHARD FAIRMAN is an Associate Editor of *Performance* magazine and a contributor to *More Opera on Record*, which will be published later this year.

VICTORIA OLENDINNO is the biographer of Edith Sitwell; was published in 1981.

K. H. D. HALEY is Professor of Modern History at the University of Sheffield.

ROSEMARY JACKSON is the author of *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion*, 1981.

PAUL JOHNSON's recent books include *A History of Christianity*, 1976, and *Enemies of Society*, 1977.

ALEXANDER KAZHDAN is Professor at the Dumbarton Oaks Centre for Byzantine studies, Harvard University.

PETER KEATINGE's *Into Unknown Britain* was published in 1977.

MICHAEL KENNAOY's books include *The Autobiography of Charles Hallé*, 1972.

ERIC KORN is an antiquarian book-seller in London.

CHARLES MADGE was Professor of Sociology at the University of Birmingham from 1950 to 1970.

WILFRID MELLERS's most recent book is *Bach and the Dance of God*, 1981.

DERVY MURPHY's books include *On a Shoestring in Coorg*, (1976), *Where the Indus is Young* (1977).

KENNETH O. MORGAN's most recent book is *Rebirth of a Nation: Wales 1880-1890*, 1981.

DAVID NOKES is a lecturer in English at King's College, London.

DEWICK PURVES is a fellow of Wolfson College, Oxford.

DAVID ROSE is a lecturer in Italian at the University of Oxford.

ALAN ROSE was *The Observer* cricket correspondent from 1950-1971.

RICHARD SHONE's books include *Bloomsbury Portraits*, 1977.

FRANCIS SPALDINO is the author of *Roger Fry, Art and Life*, 1981.

The sound of heresy

By Michael Kennedy

DONALD MITCHELL and HANS KELLER (Editors):
Music Survey
New series 1949-1952
535pp. Faber. £30.
0 571 10040 6

Collected here are the eleven issues of the quarterly *Music Survey* which were edited by Donald Mitchell and Hans Keller from 1949 to 1952 and which, in the time, caused no end of a fuss, in a restricted musical circle. Reading them again after an interval of thirty years and more, one recaptures many of the *frissons* occasioned by the outrageousness of some of the contents, but the predominant reaction in 1982 is one of admiration for the coverage and foresight of the editors. Also, they were often right – or so it seems in the present climate. It is strange to think that people now in their thirties may never have encountered these issues and therefore cannot realize how daring it was to champion some of the causes which *Music Survey* championed because Mitchell, at the age of twenty-two, was deeply disturbed by the "awful parochialism of English musical life, the complacent provinciality of the opinion-makers".

Music Survey was a polemical magazine, "attacking the attackers" of Schoenberg, Britten, Mahler, Furtwängler and others. This meant that the late Frank Howes, senior music critic of *The Times*, came in for a good deal of stick, but he was generous man and Mitchell records in the preface to the book that he was "very kind to me", whereas the BBC "did not hasten to open their doors to us during those years". Mitchell had had an earlier experience at the BBC when he gave a talk on Britten which created "an awful atmosphere... a mixture of disbelief and disapprobation... Taking Britten with such a degree of seriousness gave offence... That was the climate which engendered *Music Survey* as a corrective. Now, in the inevitable order of things, the two editors are themselves pillars of the musical establishment.

Two celebrated attacks on the attackers are here: Keller's scathing review of the reviewers of Schoenberg's *Style and Idea*, his particular target being Winton Dean and Mitchell's long and historically important survey (and demolition) of the mainly hostile first reviews of Britten's *Billy Budd*. What strikes the reader today is that both writers made their points trenchantly, wittily

and sometimes sarcastically, but conspicuously without the spitefulness which disfigures so much of the writing of some of the young critics of today. Keller, of course, was as provocative then as he is now, infuriating in his assumption that "we musicians know" and that he is the sole judge of what constitutes a musician. Nevertheless he has always regarded music as an important central function of mankind's life, not as mere decoration, and for that he may be forgiven almost everything. (Then, as now, he was adept at spotting the phoney.) These two dissimilar yet like-minded editors certainly edited almost every page bears the stamp of their personalities. They did not hesitate to contradict, even upbraid, their contributors. A typical example may suffice: In a stimulating article on Britten's eclecticism, Charles Stuart wrote: "I find it hard to lay my finger (I am happy to say) on any bar or staff and say 'This is quintessential Britten'." Keller and Mitchell would not let that go unchallenged. They added an asterisked footnote: "We don't."

There were many other contributors: Denis Stevens, for example,

flexing his muscles on Renaissance music, and writing a criticism of a Jack Westrup Oxford opera performance which led to a solicitor's letter and payment of the Heather Professor's costs (not surprisingly, for factiousness is always dangerous in cold print). Back in 1949 Harold Truscott was describing Havergal Brian as "one of the major composers England has so far produced". Paul Hamburger, who on occasions almost rivalled Keller in musicalological arrogance, wrote what passed at that time as a perceptive obituary of Strauss; Hans Redlich wrote an even better one of Kurt Weill (we are only just catching up with the views he expressed). Robert Donington is throughout the voice of moderation, and his reviews of London's concerts and operas (particularly of Covent Garden's 1949 Ring) are among the best things in the book. The young Peter Heyworth and William Mann are here (the latter hilariously giving Keller a lesson in the use of the umlaut). Charles Stuart took the critics of Stravinsky to small pieces – pertinent reading, this, in Stravinsky's centenary year. Robert Simpson, writing several years before it was established that Witt composed

the "Jens" Symphony, rightly deduced both that it could not have been written by Haydn or Beethoven and must have been written after 1792. Redlich's article on Bruckner's Symphony No "0" is a superb piece of criticism.

There are articles on the music of Wilfrid Mellers, Van Dieren, Lambert, Frankel, William Wordsworth, Arnold Cooke and Richard Arnell, and an unusual 78s. (of course) are reviews from Bayreuth, Salzburg, Vienna and elsewhere. The record reviews (mainly 78s. of course) are superbly pithy. Yet the importance of *Music Survey* lay above all in its serious approach to Schoenberg, several of whose then unpublished letters were included in what proved to be the last issue. There is also a most valuable account by Hans Nachod, Schoenberg's cousin, of the Dipping into this volume is as entertaining, instructive and stimulating as the book an exercise in period nostalgia. It is still relevant. When the history of British musical taste in the century comes to be written, *Music Survey* will provide not only indispensable source-material but will evoke a whole atmosphere. There's nothing quite like it today, more's the pity.

much highly diverting bedtime reading may be found.

It was rare in 1950 for a musical periodical to treat film music seriously, as Keller did in *Music Survey*. For such a small-circulation periodical surviving on a low income, it spread its net wide. There are lively reviews from Bayreuth, Salzburg, Vienna and elsewhere. The record reviews (mainly 78s. of course) are superbly pithy. Yet the importance of *Music Survey* lay above all in its serious approach to Schoenberg, several of whose then unpublished letters were included in what proved to be the last issue. There is also a most valuable account by Hans Nachod, Schoenberg's cousin, of the Dipping into this volume is as entertaining, instructive and stimulating as the book an exercise in period nostalgia. It is still relevant. When the history of British musical taste in the century comes to be written, *Music Survey* will provide not only indispensable source-material but will evoke a whole atmosphere. There's nothing quite like it today, more's the pity.

The urbane primitive

By Derrick Puffett

FRANÇOIS POULENC:
Emmanuel Chabrier
Translated by Cynthia Jolly
104pp. Dennis Dobson. £6.95.
0 254 77252 2

Francis Poulenc's little book on Chabrier first appeared in 1961, two years before his death. Now translated by Cynthia Jolly it has already become a classic, an indispensable source for later writers, who quote Poulenc's sayings, and cite his examples, almost as if there were no others to choose from. This is understandable. Poulenc is a vivid writer, and he is fully sympathetic to the warmth, spontaneity and humour of Chabrier's music (as he is also in his piano playing – his performances with Bernal of Chabrier songs are the best I have ever heard). But the one thing that Poulenc is not – to contradict the blurb – is "a superb critic". His book is not a work of criticism at all – indeed it would be absurd to apply the full critical apparatus to Chabrier – but an act of homage in the French tradition.

Poulenc sees Chabrier as his "musical grandfather"; he would like to make him "as much loved as admired". The book thus repays a long-standing debt of affection. Poulenc, who in another context declared that "I like, in different degrees, of course, but with the same sincerity, Monteverdi, Scarlatti, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin, Weber (my beloved Weber), Verdi, Mussorgsky, Debussy, Ravel, Bartók, and so on", would no doubt have liked to write books on all of them. (In a sense he did: anyone who listens to one of his longer works, whether the Piano Concerto or the Organ Concerto or *Le Dialogue des Carmélites*, hears a parade of influences, the very oddity of their juxtaposition helping to create the characteristic "Poulenc style".) But he is anything but objective, and should be quoted with care.

The book is a ramble through Chabrier's life and works (details of his fatal illness are omitted); there are some pleasant illustrations; the tone is conversational, even chatty, and can cloy. The avoidance of technical language, which the blurb cites as a recommendation, denies the book any critical value, though even

where Poulenc does try to be technical the results are not very helpful: "To say that some piece of music breaks new ground because it uses certain boldly juxtaposed intervals too little, and too vague, where Chabrier is concerned, this interest lies in the unexpected choice of tonal groupings, and exists much more in the spirit than in the letter." For "tonal groupings" read – what? The original French is no clearer. It can be fascinating to read what one composer writes about another, but Poulenc is completely untheoretical; although he plays Chabrier to perfection, what he has to say about him is no more interesting than what any other perceptive musician might have to offer. Even the blurb's claim that, in writing about Chabrier, Poulenc "reveals also a good deal of himself", is misleading, since the book hides a deep reserve. Apart from saying "I myself thought much about *L'Étoile* while I was waiting for *Manuelles de Trélat*", he tells us almost nothing about Chabrier's influence on his own music. Poulenc's chattiness is not the sort that reveals much about the speaker; on the contrary, it is a means of avoiding direct revelation. Behind the café-conversation of the music one senses not only

melancholy but also the loneliness of someone who wants to put a distance between himself and others. A work like *La voix humaine* embarrasses by coming out too much into the open; emotion in Poulenc needs to be refracted, preferably through surrealism and/or Apollinaire, before it finds the right tone (the religiosity of his *Carmélites* merely hovers).

So what does he tell us about Chabrier? First, his influence on later composers, notably Debussy, Ravel and Satie. Poulenc's position on these people is full of interest. Second, Chabrier's friendship with Impressionist painters (he owned a large collection of their works, catalogued here in an appendix); commenting on Chabrier's unfinished orchestration of the piano piece *Bourrée fantasque*, Poulenc relates his predecessor's liking for "bold tonal relationships" to the Impressionists, and though he does not develop the point he may have found an important link between the Impressionists and Debussy (the pointillist scoring of Chabrier's *Joyeuse Marche*, which Debussy admired, has more in common with the orchestration of *Pelléas*, or even with the work of Mahler and Webern, than it does with the music of Chabrier's French contemporaries, d'Indy, Messenet and so on). Third, there is the "wit" that transformed "this slightly awkward provincial" into "a highly urbane creature", and fourth (though Poulenc does not make this point) the naivety of a man who could claim "I am the least illiterate of composers." Fifth, Poulenc has useful things to say about the interpretation of Chabrier's piano pieces, remarks which could apply equally well to his own.

A final point to emerge from Poulenc's book (though again this is a matter of reading between the lines) is the envy with which Chabrier seems to have been regarded by his musical friends. As a postscript, Poulenc prints some tributes paid by fellow-musicians to Chabrier after his death. There are pompous appreciations by d'Indy (who calls Chabrier "that great primitive"), Charpentier, Messager and others; the lack of warmth is noticeable. The most genuine, and the most generous, comes from Chausson, who, having said all the right things, pretends simply "to remember the many happy hours passed in his company, which none of his friends will forget". It seems to me that what Chabrier's friends could not forget was the fact that this "great primitive", this minor civil servant who did not start composing seriously until he was thirty-five and died at fifty-three, had more talent than any of them and they could not forgive him for it.

ITALIAN LITERATURE

IGNAZIO SILONE:
Severina
Edited by Darina Silone
195pp. Mondadori. L.8500.

Among the writers more widely read and appreciated abroad than in their own countries (the names of Charles Morgan and A. J. Cronin come first to mind) the case of Ignazio Silone is remarkable. Here was a man whose first novel, *Pan e vino*, was translated into seventeen languages within a year of publication, and greeted with generous applause by fellow novelists such as Jacob Wasserman, William Faulkner and Graham Greene, and by such critics as Edmund Wilson. Indeed, it was generally considered to be one of the most significant novels of the century. Yet in his own country Silone remained practically unknown. One would have thought that with the end of Fascism, with his own return home after a long exile, and once the political ban on his books had been revoked, they might achieve some measure of popularity in Italy, but it was not to be. Being an ex-Communist and a fierce denouncer of the Soviet system, Silone should have appealed to the enemies of the Left, that is, to the Fascists and the Christian Democrats; but the former could not forgive him for his earlier anti-Fascist militancy, and the latter resented his condemnation of the political involvement of the Church. In fact he was, according to his own definition, "a Christian without a Church and a Socialist without a party-card"; which remark did not endear him to the Socialists either, of whose close alliance with the communists in the post-war years he was very critical. He came then to find himself in the position of Dante's *Stilich*, "dispensing God and his opponents too." Moreover, *Pan e vino* and *Bread and Wine* had been used by the Allies, during their Italian campaign, as an instrument of moral defection; copies were distributed free to the population along with the corned beef and tinned soup which nobody liked, so little wonder if the books were disliked too. The difficult Italians were induced to think that they were just propaganda, and as such, unattractive.

But even without these political implications, Silone's novels could not easily be accepted by the great majority of Italians. They resented his sharp satire of national defects, their vanity and fickleness, their lack of moral purpose, their concern for outward appearance. The imperative of pretending to be what one is not, to cut a fine figure, is too important

in Italy, and Silone made it his main target. His implacable severity and austere moralism, more consonant with a Protestant than a Roman Catholic frame of mind (which helps to explain his success in Protestant countries) did not allow him to condone the silly pretences typical of Italians. On top of which, there is very little love in his books. Manzoni did not put love into his great novel because he said, "there is so much of it already in the world that it is more than enough", but Silone's reason is more moving: as one of his characters says, "love is not made on an empty stomach". Hunger, not love, is the real obsession of his poor peasants. But when Pietro Spina, the hero of *Bread and Wine*, meets a beautiful girl at a fountain in the moonlight and they speak of "the universal brotherhood" and decide "let us part without lying together", or when Luca kneels by Ortensia in *Lucia's Secret* and says: "I don't ask anything of you, if I have your heart I need nothing else", the Italian reader feels let down.

So much for the reactions of the general public, but should the critics have shown a higher level of understanding? Alas, they too did badly. From Cecchi and Bellonci, who denounced in Silone's novels "a strong American influence", which is preposterous, to Segre, who reduced them to the level of mere journalism, their blunders make painful reading. The most benevolent were willing to place him beside Molraux and Koestler, who, like Silone, had abandoned their Communist beliefs, or with Péguy and Bernanos, who shared his love of the poor, his proud humility and his indignation for a religion without sacraments. Silone's own declaration that "writing has meant for me the absolute necessity of giving evidence", allowed Geno Pampaloni to pronounce that "his destiny was more to be a witness than a poet." Only a true poet, Eugenio Montale, was able to admit, on Silone's death, that he was "a good and gentle poet."

Silone died in 1978, leaving an unfinished novel whose MS had lain beside him in his last days after he had been working on it, very irregularly, for more than a year. This has now been edited by his widow, but being very short – less than one hundred pages, which no publisher these days thinks long enough for a book – it has been padded out with seven additional items. The first of these is an Introduction by Pampaloni, then come, alternately, three pieces each by Silone and his widow, Darina Silone's "Foreword", "History of a MS" and "The Last Hours of Ignazio Silone", are a useful com-

The need to bear witness

By Filippo Donini

plement to and commentary on her husband's writings. The last is especially touching, for the revelation it contains about one of the greatest shocks in Silone's life – the imprisonment and death of his brother, Romolo. Even on his deathbed, Silone was tortured by a feeling of guilt concerning Romolo's tragic end, which is reflected at least three times in his novels: in the deaths of Berardo in *Fonamara*, of Muccia in *Bread and Wine*, and of Agostino's brother in *The Fox and the Caneles*. All die like Romolo in prison, as a consequence of maltreatment and torture. That Silone considered himself responsible for his brother's political involvement and regretted it, was his pain and remorse, so different from the blind insensitivity of the militant Marxist illuminates very clearly the deeply Christian and gentle nature of his soul.

Two of the brief pieces included here as filling, or rather as a tasty sauce to compensate for the somewhat insipid main dish, have a distinctive Christian flavour. The first, under the title "Et in hora mortis nostrae", explains why Silone does not want a religious funeral; the second is a sort of last will and testament, asking to be buried at the foot of the church tower of Fontanara. This was indeed done, and pilgrimages of students visit the grave from time to time; usually, however, it is a lonely haven for lovers and a place where children play. Darina Silone comments affectionately: "he would have liked it."

As for the main item in the book, whose title is "Sister Severina's Hope", its substance is the conflict between a Christian conscience and the socialist calculations of a candid, innocent soul. This conflict, which no doubt Silone experienced himself and suffered from terribly, he had already portrayed in the characters of the socialist priests, Don Benedetti of *Bread and Wine* and Don Nicola of *A Handful of Blackberries*, but this time its victim is a nun – the only occasion on which Silone ever had a woman as his central character.

Severina, a girl whose mother had died early, has been brought up in a convent and taken her vows, but she also has a university degree which

enables her to teach Latin in the convent school. She is present, by chance, at a demonstration of unemployed workers, during which a man is kicked to death by the police. But when the inquest takes place and Severina is summoned as a witness, she is urged by the Mother Superior (at the request of the bishop) to confirm the police version of the accident: the policemen had been provoked and acted in self-defence. Severina refuses and instead tells the truth. Her disobedience causes a scandal, and she leaves the convent. Her life is shattered; with her veil she cannot find work as a teacher because the education authorities forbid the employment of a "renegade". She finds comfort in the friendship of some young students who involve her in their political struggle, and is finally shot by the police taking part in another demonstration.

It seems cruel to point out the faults of a story conceived and written by a sick man in the fugitive moments of energy granted to him in his last days. No doubt the fastidious Silone, who liked to polish and rewrite all that he published, would have revised the manuscript and given it a more satisfactory shape. But there is no denying that in the state we have it, it is a poor achievement. Severina's automatic loss of faith and her sudden involvement in active politics are unexplained, the repetition of police wrong-doing is mechanical, the reasons why the Church wants them cleared of blame are not made clear. Some sections, such as Severina's visit to her father or her ascent of a mountain in search of her lost faith, are gratuitous and undisguised padding. The final pages, in which the dying Severina counters the enunciation of a friendly nun for a last-minute recantation by urging her to "Christian hope in the mercy of God", are certainly a justification of the title, but they lack the warmth of deep conviction and seem contrived.

Yet even the poor story of Severina is an important document in defining Silone's moral position. The nun's refusal to give false evidence, and her declaration that "the love of truth is the meaning of life", are a distinct projection of what

actually happened in Moscow in 1927, when Silone disobeyed the Communist Party's orders and refused to accept a position of which in conscience he could not approve. That was the turning-point of his life, the reason why he left the Party and, like Severina, was called a renegade. It is poignant to find the dying man still haunted by those remote events.

Severina has then a political and historical relevance that sets it beside *Emergency Exit*, the famous book in which Silone tells the story of why and how he left the Party. But the Christian implications of the struggle between a candid soul and the authoritarian framework of a Church which is entangled in politics, also mean that *Severina* is close to *The Story of a Humble Christian*, Silone's vindication of Celestine V, the pope who renounced his throne, and whom he presents as the champion of the Church of the poor, as opposed to the Church triumphant of Boniface VIII. The student of Silone's political evolution will find in *Severina* the confirmation of his fundamental Christian attitude, though Christian outside the Church, and often in opposition to it. Darina Silone says that the first idea for the story came to her husband from reading Simone Weil's *Attente de Dieu*, a book which she gave him in 1950.

All this is interesting, and contributes to a better knowledge of Silone's political and religious thought. But does *Severina* add anything to the literary reputation of Silone as a novelist? So far as the main story goes I have to say no, but Darina Silone wanted this posthumous book to include a few beautiful pages which were first printed for private and limited circulation in 1970. These contain an account of Silone's return, from exile to his birthplace, "Fontanara". The splendour of this brief essay compensates for the thinness of Severina's story. To add those moving and poetic pages to the book, so saving them from possible oblivion, was an excellent idea, for they prove that Silone was not only a great political writer and an outstanding witness to the tragedies of our time, but that he was, indeed, "a good and gentle poet".

Redressing the balance

By Richard Fairman

IAN SPINK (General Editor):
The Athlone History of Music in Britain
Volume Five, The Romantic Age
1800-1914
Edited by Nicholas Temperley.
546pp. Athlone Press. £45.
0 485 13005 X

Almost everybody must be aware that by 1914 Britain was known as "the Land of the Music". It is a situation which not many have been prepared to discuss, and fewer still to challenge. In its bibliography of music in England, the *New Grove* lists barely a handful of general books on this period, most of them dating from the turn of the century. A warm welcome must be accorded to this new volume edited by Nicholas Temperley, doubly so because it has been chosen to launch a series which will cover the history of music in Britain from the Middle Ages to the present day. Six volumes of the *Athlone History of Music in Britain* are planned.

British and American scholars share this first volume in equal proportion. Ian Spink, general editor of the series, remarks that they worked "in the hope of finding an English Beethoven or Wagner... but to see why there was none and what only celebrated soloists, but also a host of rank-and-file musicians. Too often it has seemed easy to assume that since there were few outstanding personalities – Parry and Stanford, Sullivan and Elgar – there must have been a dearth of musical activity in the country at large. In fact, the opposite is true, and this book does much to redress the balance."

The role of the artist in society, musical education and publishing are discussed in the opening chapters. They allow us to appreciate the general musical climate of the time, however overcast it might at first sight seem. Studies have been made before of the entertainment of the lower and the music-hall – but this is the first major attempt to integrate the vast output with the loftier musical establishment of the day.

Andrew Lamb's chapter on music in the theatre exemplifies the re-

wards of this approach: between the comic operas of Gilbert and Sullivan at one end of the scale and music-hall at the other lies a mass of popular theatrical works. Delys's *Gelsia*, now long forgotten, is but one example of a work which won international success, even achieving more performances in Germany than any German-language work of the time. Temperley also contributes an authoritative chapter on ballroom and drawing-room music.

Nevertheless, the greater part of the book is devoted to a detailed study of art music in its various forms. Oratorio and chamber music are thoroughly covered of course, but so is music in the theatre, with full three chapters – by Bruce Carr, Michael Hurd and Nigel Burton – allowing us to catch a glimpse of works which are never performed today. A couple of music examples in Burton's chapter are partially transposed, but otherwise the standard of reproduction throughout is extremely high. A re-appraisal such as this may well prompt a revival of the best of the operas. The book concludes with three useful chapters on music theory and criticism.

My only regret is the decision not

to include a separate chapter on performance. As so often happens when a country is at its peak in economic terms, Britain saw its own composers lagging behind at the same time as it led the world in actual performance. Only Parry could rival London in the range and quality of its music. This was the period which saw solid foundations laid for bodies such as the Royal Italian Opera, the Henry Wood Promenade Concerts, the Hallé Orchestra and the Royal Choral Society. They all feature here in their respective places, but a single author might have discussed more conclusively the influence these new performing groups and the continual influx of foreign works had on our struggling composers.

Some interested readers may wish to return to contemporary sources: the recollections of Henry Chorley (if they can find them), George Bernard Shaw's *Music in London*, or reports from the *Musical Times* as selected by Scholes in his *Mirror of Music*. Of modern texts, however, this is a well printed, has an extensive bibliography, and contains a wealth of information which is positively symptomatic in its size and scale.

fatal flight

By John Gatt-Rutter

ALBERTO CAVAGLION:
Nella lotta straniera
Gli ebrei di S. Martin Vésuble
179pp. L'Arciere. L.8000.

Alberto Cavaglion has pieced together the story of several hundred Jews who moved to Nice in the tiny Italian-held part of France after Mussolini's downfall in 1943, hoping (justifiably) that they would be better treated by the Italians than by the SS. Dr Cavaglion has assembled an impressive array of evidence from memoirs, clergy, military, parish and hospital records, local archives, diaries and correspondence – to trace the progress of this community. They had arrived there, to a benign reception, under Italian jurisdiction, in the Alpine village resort of St Martin Vésuble, where they stayed until 8.1943, then began an epic trek over the Alps, passing into Italy, where they were no less benignly

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Along the way we have a circumstantial account of the resolute and courageous help given to the intended victims by Italians of all social levels: from the international banker Angelo Donati to the village priests in the Cuneo province, particularly Don Raimondo Viale in Borgo, and Cardinal Boetto in Genoa, but including all the ordinary people who sheltered Jewish refugees in their homes and civil, military and health officials who did what they could to facilitate their survival. Some did indeed survive, either by being smuggled out of Nazi-dominated Italy or by lying low until the end of the war. A considerable number were active in the local Resistance. Cavaglion gives often painstakingly detailed or collated lists of names of Italians and passengers on the death-trains. But, no more than anyone, is he able to be dispassionate when dealing with Nazi actions in Nice, and to Borgo San Dalmazzo, and especially the massacre in Boves, whose perpetrators have never been brought to book.

A canto at a time

By David Robey

KENELM FOSTER and PATRICK BOYDE (Editors):
Cambridge Readings in Dante's Comedy
213pp. Cambridge University Press.
£19.50
0 521 24140 5

The readings contained in this volume are a selection from a series of lectures on the *Divine Comedy* given in Cambridge over the past dozen years by present and former members of the university. Each one deals with a single canto of the poem, on the model of the Italian lecture *Dante*, and consists in varying mixture of description, interpretation, background information and literary analysis. The volume has been put together as a tribute to Umberto Limenanti, who recently retired from the Cambridge chair of Italian, and like the original lectures it is intended for non-specialists.

One might reasonably expect that a book of this kind should help the reader both to understand Dante's text and to respond to it as a literary work of art. The first part of the book is probably the easier one, and on the whole it has been successfully accomplished by all the readings, each of which maintains a high standard of clarity, exactness and pertinence. But to describe the literary interest or effect of the *Comedy* seems less easy, especially within the limitations imposed by the canto-by-

canto format. What do the different contributors have to say about this?

For Patrick Boyde and Judith Davies the interest of their chosen canto seems to lie mainly in the dramatic qualities of Dante's characterization, which they illustrate in their discussions, respectively, of the episodes in *Inferno* of the suicides and of Guido da Montefeltro; according to Professor Boyde, Dante is "one of the greatest dramatists never to have written a play". The two other readings on *Inferno*, by Robin Kirkpatrick and Pietro Bolatti, have a more formalist emphasis. The first deals with Dante's lingering and detailed description of the punishment of the thieves, concentrating on the interplay between the "primitive suggestion" of the sub-ject-matter and the impression of order and moral health conveyed by various devices of style. The second of these readings, on *Inferno* XXXIII, insists particularly on the pattern of related imagery that runs through Ugolino's harrowing account of his and his children's death by starvation.

Three of the readings on *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*, by Philip McNair, Kenelm Foster and Professor Limenanti, are almost entirely concerned with points of interpretation, and make only occasional observations about the poem's literary effect. On the other hand, Peter Drönke's discussion of the procession in *Purgatorio* XXXIX makes a strong case for seeing a personal, emotional meaning in an episode which is commonly regarded as little more than a decorative allegory; Joseph Cremons

traces the elements of stylistic and thematic unity that bind together the different parts of *Canto XXVI of Paradiso*, and Prudence Shaw provides a suggestive account of the varied and powerful images in *Canto XXX* by means of which Dante conveys his vision and experience of heavenly bliss.

All of these readings have something worthwhile to say about Dante's poem, and, taken together, they draw a broad and varied picture of its qualities as a work of art. It is difficult, nevertheless, to avoid the feeling that they are not really the best way of encouraging the non-specialist's interest in the *Comedy*. This is partly because the format generates a degree of detail that is sometimes hard to follow (harder, no doubt, in print than in lecture-form); but it is also because the format tends to concentrate on local sources of literary effect at the expense of larger-scale features. Very little is said in this book about the overall structure of the poem, as a progressive and eventually total revelation of the nature of creation and the relationship between God and man; and not much about the distinctive boldness, energy and density of Dante's use of language. Yet if any features of the *Comedy* are to appeal to the modern reader, it must be these.

Edited and translated by Giorgio Melchiori, James Joyce's *Epiphany* and *Alphabetical Notebook* are published in Italy in one volume as *Epiphany* (1900-1904). Rubric (1900-1904). (160pp. Milan: Mondadori, L.400. 0021032 6).

Being and being thought

By Mary Tiles

G. E. M. ANSCOMBE:
Collected Philosophical Papers
Volume One: From Parmenides to Wittgenstein
141pp. £10. 0 631 12922 7
Volume Two: Metaphysics and the Philosophy of Mind
239pp. £15. 0 631 12932 4
Volume Three: Ethics, Religion and Politics
161pp. £12. 0 631 12942 1
Oxford: Blackwell.

Among contemporary philosophers G. E. M. Anscombe stands in a class on her own, resisting classification into (this or that school of thought). She is perhaps most widely known through her association with Wittgenstein: as one of those responsible for bringing to publication the fragmentary manuscripts which he left behind him, and as the person who has devoted much time to teaching others, not what Wittgenstein said, but how to think for themselves in thinking about Wittgenstein's writings. However, these volumes include only two papers explicitly concerned with Wittgenstein's philosophy, and while one may find Wittgensteinian concerns underlying many other papers, it would be wholly inappropriate to apply the label "Wittgensteinian" to Professor Anscombe's own philosophy.

What she does share with Wittgenstein is a way of doing philosophy which I can only describe as experimental. My image of an experimental philosopher is of a person who can be taken by a problem (such as "What distinguishes actions which are intentional from those

which are not?" (Paper 8, Volume Two) which even the philosophically unsophisticated can be led to see, and who proceeds to explore it, seeking understanding of the puzzling conceptual phenomena as they are found, without appeal to an overarching philosophical theory couched in the technical jargon of academic philosophers. If there is an overarching position here, it is the view (expressed by Wittgenstein) that there can be no philosophical theories: that the task of philosophy is to show us how to think our way clearly around and out of the conceptual problems which are thrown up by thought about other matters (such as whether it is always wrong to kill an innocent person).

The general absence of philosophical jargon and its accompanying preconceptions does not, however, mean that these papers are easy reading. Anscombe's willingness to question what many have taken for granted (such as, that remembering is a kind of experience, and one which gives content to statements about the past (Paper 12, Volume Two), and her ability to convince us that what had seemed obvious is far from being so, can induce a feeling of intellectual disorientation. Unable to see where the argument can now lead, one cannot anticipate the turns it takes. Frequently the structure of the pieces becomes apparent only in the way in which the harmonic and rhythmic structures of a rich and complex piece of music gradually emerge after repeated listening. There are papers in these volumes which, after a first reading, remain largely impenetrable to me. There are others from which I have learnt a great deal, but only after several readings.

However, when the papers are col-

lected together, a certain unity of theme and purpose can be discerned in the corpus which is not apparent when its parts are taken in isolation. In this way many of the papers shed light upon each other. The themes concern intentional action, causality, and the relation between thought and reality.

The purpose, or at least part of the purpose, is to provide the groundwork for an adequate moral philosophy. For Anscombe, as a deeply convinced Catholic, a prerequisite of an adequate moral philosophy is that it not rule out as impossible the Hebrew-Christian ethic. In "Modern Moral Philosophy" she argues that every academic philosopher since Sidgwick has written in such a way as to exclude this of the Hebrew-Christian ethic that certain things are prohibited simply in virtue of their description as such-and-such identifiable kinds of action, regardless of any further consequences (a position whose practical consequences are illustrated in Paper 9, Volume Three, which considers the Catholic position on birth-control). But Anscombe claims, all the best-known English academic philosophers are committed to theories according to which "e.g. it is not possible to hold that it cannot be right to kill the innocent as a means to any end whatsoever and that someone who formulates this is in error." (This R. M. Hare's prescriptivism as well as any form of consequentialism.) She argues that moral philosophy should dispense with the notion of moral obligation and concentrate, as did Aristotle and Plato, on virtue and the specific virtues, such as justice. But she recognizes that to be in a position to do so it must first

investigate concepts, such as "action", "intention", "pleasure", and "wanting". Investigations of these concepts are undertaken whilst "wanting ethics" is pursued in the papers on the philosophy of mind in Volume Two.

But equally, any consideration of human action must raise questions about causality and confront determinism. Here Anscombe's probing calls into question many of the doctrines about causality which, with the overwhelming success of Hume's account, have come to seem so obvious as not even to amount to substantive theses. (For example, "that being caused is - non-trivially - instantiating some exceptionless generalization saying 'that such an event always follows such antecedents'") Nevertheless, Hume is evidently a great admirer. The papers on causality (as well as that on promising) take his philosophy seriously and are a source of insight into his position, while showing, with care and originality, why it cannot stand unchallenged.

The question of the relation between thought and reality, or perhaps better, between thought and its objects, is at once the most pervasive and the most elusive of Anscombe's themes. It is first taken up in the paper which opens the first volume: a discussion of Parmenides' contention that it is the same thing that can be thought and can be (from which he concludes that "what is not and cannot be" cannot be thought). This Parmenidean utterance recurs in several different contexts. Anscombe's concern here is to steer a course between "the falsehoods of idealism" and the stupidities of empiricist realism". But this is a notoriously difficult course to steer

and she does not underestimate the hazards.

The retreat from atomism... is far more difficult than might appear... it seems clear that thoughts are characterised by what they are of, with no substantive being of their own; but how this is so is so intensely obscure that one surveys the obscurities of the scholastic *esse intelligibile*, whose actuality is the same thing as the actual occurrence of a thought of such-and-such, with a not totally unfavourable eye.

But why should one be so concerned to try to steer this difficult course? There are many possible motivations but one, conjectured reason is as follows: Anscombe argues that one should accept Hume's conclusion that promises have no force antecedent to human conventions, but sees in this conclusion the key to the refutation of Humean empiricism - the fact that the conventions governing our linguistic practices are what give meaning to words, not our ideas or mental images. She goes on to claim that "not only promises, but also rules and rights, are essences created and not merely captured or expressed by the grammar of our languages." But in spite of this conclusion she resists the idea that the True and the Good are similarly created by the grammar of our languages. That is to say, she resists linguistic idealism. In the final paper in Volume One she claims that the house she comes to haunt as an employee of the Stokeses is the Stokes mansion was a house of horrors and stairways and endless darknesses; of mormurs and whispers and silence. For all its electric light and bustle of servants, it did not strike Kitty as a happy house. It stood exiled on its hill, lonely and brooding

FCTION

The matriarch's mission

By Alan Bold

EDWARD STEWART:
For Richer, For Poorer
402pp. Collins. £7.95.
0 575 03115 5

Edward Stewart's new novel opens in 1934 with a Vice-Presidential inauguration in Pennsylvania Avenue, and audaciously presents its formidable heroine Kitty Kellogg in an epic flashback that finally returns the reader to the beginning of the story. The confident, headlong style is justified since the novel depends on the credibility of Kitty. She is a woman with a mission; though born to poverty in Pennsylvania she is determined to wage a successful war against the oil-wesley family who murdered the father of her child.

In rapid succession Kitty meets the Communist union leader Tyrone Duncannon, conceives a child by him at the first attempt, watches him die in the Bartonsville massacre of strikers, then swears vengeance on the Stokes family whose economic power broke the strike. She sacrifices everything to this great cause and carries a cane around with her like a cross. This explains the Gothic appearance of the house she comes to haunt as an employee of the Stokeses: "The Stokes mansion was a house of horrors and stairways and endless darknesses; of mormurs and whispers and silence. For all its electric light and bustle of servants, it did not strike Kitty as a happy house. It stood exiled on its hill, lonely and brooding

behind its guarded fence."

There is a sense of *déjà vu* about that scenario which will be familiar to students of American Gothic. In order to introduce some variety into the narrative, Stewart adds to the doom-laden atmosphere some melodramatic touches of symbolism and gossipy references to contemporary history. Kitty, after all, needs an environment to expand in. She seduces Johnny Stokes, the artistic son of the tyrannical oil man, and passes off Duncannon's child as a genuine member of the Stokes family. However, there is blood on the infant; at the christening Kitty is insulted and assaulted. Old Stokes takes drastic action with tragic consequences for the poor family he holds responsible. As a result of this development there is a violent confrontation between old Stokes and his wife; the family, in fact, is depicted as disintegrating before the Irish eyes of Kitty.

Such a heroine has to keep other company than those she wishes to destroy, and great names begin to drop into the saga. At Kitty's wedding reception William Randolph Hearst, Joseph P. Kennedy, Billy Sunday and Gloria Swanson appear. When the Stokeses move to New York there is an appropriately impressive cast of celebrated characters. Edith Rockefeller, divorced daughter of John D., dances drunk with Gene Tunney. Cole Porter sends Kitty a dozen roses. Inevitably, too, there are the stars of the period, Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald. When Kitty's child cries there is Zelda, on cue, to "burst a bottle of champagne on Kitty." This should keep the breath

Although Kitty has another son - Bart, a genuine Stokes, born and bred - she concentrates on storming American capitalism vicariously through her first son, Jay, since his family whose name he bears. When the Great Crash comes the Stokeses get richer: "They bought America and they bought it cheap." Money is not enough, though, so Kitty acquires an expensive social polish and the family finally make the New York Social Register. Kitty continues to fight for Jay, helping him stay at school despite charges of antisocial behaviour, extricating him from sexual complications when he lives it up as a rich undergraduate. The problem is that Jay does not seem to want greatness thrust on him. He is elected to the Massachusetts state legislature but to his wife, Toni, he is "a washout." As a man, as a senator, as a husband, Kitty, however, is convinced that "Tyrone Duncannon's son would be the next President of the United States."

The whole thrust of the novel is provided by the larger-than-life figure of Kitty. She is hardly ever offstage; the men in her life merely act on her behalf. According to this fiction, and it is a persuasive one, America is a matriarchy in which power is delegated to favourite sons. Stewart has written another exciting book, carefully contrived for maximum impact in the blockbuster mode. There are hardly any moments of light relief or relaxation; from the first to the last page the reader is bombarded with crises and catastrophes in a world that is made to measure by the memorable heroine.

Plotting for lucre

By Ian Hislop

HERBERT LIEBERMAN:
Night Call From a Distant Time Zone
313pp. Hutchinson. £7.95.
0 09 147140 0

Night Call from a Distant Time Zone poses as a financial thriller. But as we persevere with the author's struggle to fashion a credible story from the plight of the falling dollar, we begin to suspect that the conventions of the genre, while pursued with admirable stamina, are inadequate to sustain his interest. At this point the novel acquires a certain perverse fascination. What is it that compels Herbert Lieberman to write about the world of high finance?

The lengthy descriptions of the mechanics of the currency markets lead one to suppose that it may be a desire to display some intimate knowledge of the inner workings of that world. The dust-jacket proclaims that the novel is "disturbingly well-researched". It is therefore somewhat disconcerting to find, in a detailed account of the London gold fixing, that the names of only two of the five market members are given correctly. The author's obsession with the jargon of the foreign exchange market might well be excused if its complexities did not so bemuse him. We find it hard to believe that the protagonists are making millions out of currency arbitrage when spot/forwards are confused with forward swaps.

The development of the plot does little to restore the author's credibil-

ity. By natural inclination he seems more suited to the vocation of librettist than thriller writer. For where but in some as yet unexplored realm of opera would one ever find an American foreign exchange dealer, stealing into a Japanese financier's castle in Liechtenstein, with a plan to abduct the financier (during a banquet to celebrate his marriage to his French mistress) and bring him to trial for fraud in the United States, while his son by his former, Japanese wife (whom he has murdered) lurks in the grounds with a loaded pistol, disguised as a cook and hidden behind a potted camellia, plotting to redeem the family honour?

A tale as preposterous as this must conceal some more subtle purpose. The quotations from military history which preface each of the sixty-three chapters hint at some analogy between high finance and war. In case the analogy eludes us, we are shown the foreign exchange dealer planning his campaign against the Japanese financier on a tattered square of parchment at the top of which the word STRATEGICS appears in large handprinted block letters. But the author could have thought of some more delicate way of creating dramatic tension than by means of a detailed description of the dealer reenacting Rommel's desert campaign with toy soldiers, just before a grenade is lobbed into his basement.

Beyond all these war games, what is it, finally, that attracts Lieberman to the world of high finance? The scene in which the Japanese financier huddles by his father's treasure in the bowels of the castle makes us suspect some darker motive. Could it be the lure of filthy lucre?

Before the fall

By T. O. Treadwell

TAD SZULC:
Diplomatic Immunity
495pp. Heinemann. £7.50.
0 434 75350 5

Tad Szulc is an eminent American journalist who has long specialized in Latin-American affairs. *Diplomatic Immunity* is his first novel. A journalist's reasons for turning to fiction are presumably as various as those of anyone else, but there is one motive tell a story in its essential truth, without the restraints inevitably imposed by strict adherence to the codes of the profession. All journalists know things that are unprovable or unattributable and the temptation to serve them up, lightly disguised, in the plot of a novel is not always resisted. The difficulty is that readers can never be certain about the status of the stories set before them - truth or fiction, how are we to know?

The question is important in this instance because *Diplomatic Immunity*, though a thin and wooden novel, is frightening if its implications have any basis in fact. The story is set in the Central American Republic of Malagua, a semi-fictional country that shares its geographical location and a few historical details with El Salvador; but it is in most respects identical to Nicaragua. The plot concerns Julia Savage, a clever and well-connected young person who has just been appointed US ambassador to Malagua in spite of the hostility of the State Department as is Juan Ferrer, a brutal, ruthless and politically adroit tyrant who is the family's successive member of his family to have ruled that country now reduced to a private fiefdom.

Ferrer rules heavily on the United States for aid, and he is popular in Malagua for his ruthless and his conservative circles there because of his absolute anti-communism; he takes care to cultivate influential businessmen and members of Congress, playing skilfully on their fears of Castro and the spread of the Cuban revolution. To his own country, though, he is a despotic and vicious tyrant, gathering strength, guerrilla

side and the capital, and signs of disaffection are apparent in the middle classes and the Church. Ferrer desperately needs American arms to shore up his rule, and the question of whether or not he is to be given them is the central issue of the novel.

Julie Savage immediately comes under pressure. The guerrillas set off a bomb to greet her on her arrival in Malagua and things go on getting more difficult. She establishes contact with forces opposed to President Ferrer and finds herself falling in love with one of the guerrilla leaders, a fiery young Jesuit who has conveniently lost his religious convictions and is on the point of leaving the Church. After much agonizing, Julia decides that Ferrer's fall is both inevitable and desirable, and she recommends that American weapons be withheld.

It turns out, though, that Ambassador Savage is only nominally the representative of American policy in Malagua; the real power is held by Jim Morgan, the sinister CIA station chief who is unequivocally pro-Ferrer and who treats official American policy with contempt. Julia persuades the President of the United States to deny Ferrer the arms he needs, but Morgan and the CIA supply them covertly. In spite of this the dictator is overthrown, yet the success of the revolution doesn't solve Malagua's problems.

Diplomatic Immunity is a roman à clef about the revolution in Nicaragua. Juan Ferrer is a version of President Anastasio Somoza, last of a family that governed that unhappy country, enriching themselves in the process, from 1937, and Ferrer's overthrow clearly parallels that of Somoza by the Sandinista revolutionaries. Clumsy as Szulc's book is as a work of fiction, it is thoroughly convincing in its representation of the forces governing American policy in Latin America. It is to be hoped that he exaggerates the ideology and influence of the CIA, but Szulc is a good and experienced journalist, and he ought to know.

The first issue of *Interzone*, a new British magazine of science fiction and fantasy (Volume 1 No. 31pp. £1.25) contains work by M. John Harrison, Keith Roberts, Angelo Carter, John Sladek and Michael Moorcock.

Crisis talks

By Monty Haltrecht

ALEN DRURY:
The Hill of Summer
484pp. Michael Joseph. £8.95.
0 7181 2117 1

In Allen Drury's latest novel, which is set in the immediate future, the new Russian President Yuri Soragin is ready to go ahead with plans for world conquest. He orders manoeuvres on land, sea, in the air and in space, and though their warlike purpose is suspected, it is proved only when a detector reveals a buildup of missile-launching submarines off Cuba. After bringing down an American jet and provoking an ultimatum, Soragin withdraws, underservedly earning himself the world's approval, but leaving behind as much weaponry as his plan requires. Whether he succeeds ultimately will not be known until we have the promised sequel.

This is an ambitious novel, centered on great personages and great events; the crisis is "quite likely the worst the world has seen". There are quotations at the head of each chapter urging the reality of the Russian threat - for example, Stalin: "As long as Capitalism and Socialism exist, we cannot live in peace. In the end one or other will triumph." And yet for all this, *The Hill of Summer* is a slight work, with a large stage, but a small action. The novel events take place off the page and are perfunctorily described, and the plotting is at times clumsy.

The novel mainly consists of exchanges between the two Presidents in UN and Nato meetings. Drury, who has been a Washington political correspondent, knows these procedures well. The Soviet Union is characterized by inhuman efficiency, and Russians are smug, beady-eyed, grin-faced. Drury equates humanity with inefficiency, praising America fondly as a "crazy, bumbling, idealistic country", given to the "often inept but basically good-hearted and well-meaning ways of democracy". The new American President, Delbacher, is portly and paternal - to him and his side belong the laughter and the happy family relationships. The defector, who yet may prove a double agent, offers as his creden-

tials an adored wife and children (effortlessly whisked to safety in one sentence by the CIA) and a fetching grin. These alone make him an honorary American.

From his beginnings as a writer Drury has assumed an essential connection between personal likeability and political outlook. Hence Soragin remains unredeemed - end therefore inhuman and unbelievable. Delbacher is equally unbelievable. In contrast to his immediate predecessors he is "direct, decisive - and, well, Presidential", but he is not permitted any range of human behaviour either, and has to remain within the bounds of his "normal, easy-going amicability". Drury, dogged and over-insistent, will clearly never abandon himself empty on this particular theme - but his method is liable to rebound against himself, since his opponents, condemning his crudity, can all too easily feel justified in dismissing his theses without giving it any serious consideration. The real opposition, against whom he raises his voice and metaphorical fist, comes out so much from the Russians as from complacent Western liberals, and the left-wing establishment, "the sorry-eyed, hap-

minded, film-dammable dupes who, unknowingly, did the Soviet's work in America."

There is a submerged plaintive note in the novel, as well as much overt protest against those ready to criticize American attitudes while taking up pacifist, conciliatory attitudes to the aggressor. There is approval for the unnamed woman Prime Minister of England, who asserts that "the responsible nations of this world know full well that in a world without the friendship of the United States they would be lost". A private meeting between the President gives Delbacher the chance for an outburst: "You are Evil. Evil - Evil. I cannot tell you the contempt I feel for you. It goes beyond capacity." This release of hot air serves mainly as relief for the author's own feelings. The verbal confrontations do not impinge greatly on the action, as the Soviet leader, in spite of being boldly confronted, proceeds almost imperturbably to get his way. For all that is at stake, there is no tension. There is a simple pleasure in seeing a strong man standing up to a bully - but as in all Drury's own stories, we already know that the bully must always turn tail.

Criminal proceedings

FRANK PARRISH:
Snare in the Dark
216pp. Constable. £5.95.
0 09 464380 6

Dan Mallett, Frank Parrish's poacher hero, has to clear himself from the suspicion of murder: a gamekeeper who finds Mallett setting snares for pheasants gets a crossbow bolt through the neck. A neat plot, pleasing characters, and a fox's eye view of the countryside.

THOMAS HENEGAN:
A Cargo of Tin
201pp. Deutsch. £6.95.
0 233 97449 0

Norwegian shipowner in short; the crime is investigated and narrated by the firm's Finanzdirektor, John Henniken, who finds the investigation takes him to the Far East and into

complicated international skulduggery. The book reads rather as if it has been written by a computer hooked into the financial pages, but the detail is solid and the intrigue not unconvincing.

JONATHAN GASH:
Firefly Gadroon
208pp. Collins. £6.50.
0 00 231296 4

A glimpse of an antique Japanese firefly cage in an auction room; and dealer Lovejoy is off again, scouring his native East Anglia for a hidden treasure. Implausibilities abound; but the pace is too hot to inquire, and the reader's critical faculties are in addition numbed by the continual stream of information, like hot sand, into one's ear. But if it is a sensation one can get to enjoy.

Rules for meaning things

By Simon Blackburn

IRVING BLOCK (Editor):
Perspectives on the Philosophy of Wittgenstein
322pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £15.
0 631 19550 5

I told him he ought not simply to state what he thinks true, but to give arguments for it, but he said arguments would spoil his beauty, and that he would feel as if he was drying a flower with muddy hands... I told him I hadn't the heart to say anything against that, and that he had better acquire a slave to state the arguments.

Wittgenstein equaled more people to state his arguments than Russell might have approved of. Fourteen of them do so in the present volume, which grows out of a colloquium held to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of his death, in London, Ontario in 1976. Kenneth Blackwell's interesting essay is the only biographical one, and contains the above quotation from Russell. The rest of the papers concern the arguments. Slightly under half of them discuss earlier theories, and slightly over half of them later ones, and many consider the relationship between the earlier and later works.

One theme which surfaces in a number of essays is that of finding an adequate way to describe the difference between the early and late philosophies. The *Tractatus*, according to the official story, is realistic, atomistic, systematic, attached to a correspondence theory of truth, and a truth-conditional theory of meaning; the *Philosophical Investigations* rejects the realism, the correspondence theory, is hostile to systematic semantics, and perhaps sympathetic to theories of meaning which have nothing to do with truth conditions. The trouble is that almost all the labels in this story are shifting and unreliable. Some of the writers here, notably Saul Kripke, and Michael Dummett, endorse some or all of the official story, but others, notably Brian McGuinness and Peter Winch,

cast doubt upon it. To know which side is right we need more authoritative account of the positions on either side of the contrast; here, as always, our exegesis is no better than our philosophy; we are confined by our own understandings of the terms in which we describe others.

Hilid Ishiguro, Brian McGuinness, David Pears, Anthony Kenny, Peter Hacker and Erik Stenius each discuss aspects of the early philosophy. The recent resurgence of discussion about inner mental codes whose elements are structured in ways which enable them to represent similarly structured parts of the world shows how difficult it is to escape from the picture theory of meaning. Professor Stenius manfully defends this theory against Wittgenstein's later rejection (which he believes to be only apparent). In an elegant paper comparing the earlier and later philosophies of language, Kenny puts his finger on the fundamental problem: the source of the lines of projection associating elements of the picturing medium with elements of the world. Pears discusses the independence of elementary propositions, and Ishiguro gives a very useful account of puzzling aspects of Wittgenstein's attitude to the theory of types. Peter Hacker has more ambitious aims: he presents a confidently detailed development of the picture theory. Whether we expect that elusive vision to be so captured depends, as I have already suggested, on whether we can rely upon the hardness of the terms - correspondence, agreement, object - used in the description.

Michael Dummett finds in the *Investigations* passages rejecting any general distinction between the sense of an utterance - its content, or its particular piece of information, or its transformation it expresses - and its forward, in which examples would be, interrogatively, assertively, in command, metaphorically, story or riddle. However, the passages to which he refers (192, 23, 309, 363) do not show Wittgenstein directly denying this distinction. He is concerned to stress the unlimited

variety of forces, and to fight against the "mentalistic" account of what it is to grasp a sense. The former point is certainly compatible with the distinction, just as say, a parallel point about games is compatible with the distinction between playing a game and earning a living. And Dummett says, systematic semantics cannot be done without the distinction (neither can logic). Wittgenstein is sometimes taken to be hostile to any systematic semantic account of a natural language. But in fact I doubt whether he would have been - he would probably have done better to allow the possibility of such accounts, but deny that they had sufficient philosophical interest to bear on his issues.

Professor Anscombe casts doubt on a "theory of language", meaning a description showing how noises are significant speech, from a different direction. She says how sophisticated a procedure it is to divide speech into words. Acoustics does not do it for us (the sound, but not the word "slab" may appear in "This slab is hot", and printers' divisions are "in part purely conventional". She seems to be arguing that because

of this there is no propriety in conceiving of the "word" apart from its meaning, and in asking what gives it the meaning which it has. It is hard to follow, but if she is suggesting this argument, she is surely mistaken. Suppose we concede that words are identified, in practice end theory, by their semantic roles; a word is best thought of as something whose presence is a meaning-determining feature of a sentence (which is why until you know something of what foreign words they use, and it is all gabbled). It does not follow that we cannot pointfully imagine the same feature having different effects, nor that we should not ask what makes it true that it has the effects it does, and not others.

There are useful papers on the later philosophy by Peter Finch, D. Z. Phillips, Paul Ziff, and Frank Cioffi. The latter pair take radically different attitudes to some of Wittgenstein's more gnomie pronouncements about aesthetics, human sacrifice, and the like, and make an agreeable contrast with each other. The former are concerned with more general issues in the theory of knowledge.

Fitting the Crime

Wogekind is incarcerated in a fortress for committing a satire against the Kaiser. It's really quite a fine and private lodging. No hanging of spoons and platters in a fastness. Though meals are sometimes late arriving. They serve him generously with pen and paper. Sentenced to six months of hard writing. Then he'll walk out. In his bulging valise. A nightshirt, a dayshirt and a manuscript. Someone will publish it, others will read it. To live at the fin du siècle was all but bliss!

D. J. Enright

Backgrounds for being in

By Richard Shone

ISABELLE ANSCOMBE:
Omega and after
Bloomsbury and the Decorative Arts
176pp, 124 illustrations. Thames and
Hudson, £10.50.
0 500 23337 3

The term "Bloomsbury art" is a comparatively recent one and embodies a recognition of certain qualities and standards, in life as much as in work, which were shared by a small group of artists. Such qualities, though not exclusive to this group, are found in concentration in its work and serve to distinguish it from even its close contemporaries in the Post-Impressionist movement in England. The three conspicuous names are Roger Fry, Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant; there are no other contenders, even though at the time of their early association, during the explosion of modern French art into England and the start of the Omega Workshops, there were others whose work, if generally more conservative in its modernism, shows certain Bloomsbury characteristics. Their subsequent development, however, only underlines their fundamental difference from the Bloomsbury artists. The future Verist Frederick Elidells collaborated with Fry and Grant and for two or three years was a close associate; other names include Henry Lamb, Nine Hammett, Edward Wolfe, Carrington and the French painter Henri Doucet, killed in the First World War. Later associates included Frederick Porter, Bernard Adeney, Keith Daynes, Douglas Davidson, the designer Allan Walton and the sculptors Debon and Tomlin. Nearly all of these artists are included in the present book by virtue of their contribution to the decorative arts during the period 1912-30, as pioneered by the Omega Workshops and by Grant and Vanessa Bell after the Omega's demise in 1919. This is the first study to be devoted exclusively to this aspect of Bloomsbury's contribution to English art. As such it is to be welcomed for its clear style, detail and generous selection of illustrations which juxtaposes documentary photographs with those taken recently by Howard Grey at Charleston, Monks House and other surviving shrines.

This said, there is one important reservation to be made and that concerns the book's conception. Isabelle Ancombe has mixed biographical detail with her consideration of the works themselves, with the result that the book is thrown out of balance by the repetition of familiar biographical facts at the expense of concrete facts on the commissions, designs and achievements of the artists. As a result, Vanessa Bell emerges as the most considered and considerable figure; certainly the author appears to believe she was the

best painter of the group. This is an opinion increasing in currency (although in the early 1930s, Segonzac rated her the best painter in England). As a designer, however, this estimate of her seems questionable. Grant is infinitely more various and fertile in his designs. He attempts more and if, as is obvious from some of the illustrations, his success rate has been impressive. He has the gift for choosing surprising images which fit neatly into specific, often unusual spaces. If at times he can be too busy and overripe, Vanessa Bell, especially in her later work, leans towards the pretty and delicate - qualities she roundly condemned in 1912 as the hallmark of English interiors.

The biographical passages are long enough to admit psychological speculation, yet too brief to give a complete picture. The paragraphs on Bloomsbury's pacifism, for example, are slightly misleading, while the personal relationship between Grant and Vanessa Bell was more complicated and neurotic than is suggested. On the other hand, an advantage of Isabelle Ancombe's biographical narrative is that it conveys the domestic background against which the designs were produced, and the probable fact that, without Vanessa Bell, Grant would have achieved much less in a vein in which, as commentators from Fry onwards have consistently claimed, he worked most happily. For one, hope that some of the rigorously constructed landscapes and still-lives produced concurrently with the decorative work and often regarded as meretricious, will be given their due - a reversal of opinion perhaps already in train.

Isabelle Ancombe begins with a discussion of Roger Fry's reasons for establishing the Omega and his stimulating effect on its artist-employees. She adds some useful details on the Marlborough workshop in Paris and is well-qualified to place the Omega within a European context of design and the decorative arts. But she seems to waver in her estimate of the Omega. Although its textiles and pottery were praised at the time, I doubt whether they were much known after the First World War - even if Paul Nash's designs owe more to the Omega's example than to perhaps generally recognized. At one point, the author defends the Workshops against the hoary argument that their products were badly made; later she talks of their "poor workmanship". This latter impression has gained some currency in recent years by the relative inaccessibility of and lack of attention given to the Omega collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Isabelle Ancombe's copious illustrations and references may help to arouse a feeling for conservation in the indifferent hearts

of curators and owners. Furthermore, the restoration of Charleston, currently proceeding, will undoubtedly increase interest in the 1930s; the painted panels and screens were a generalized back-

ground, often muted in colour, against which working and living continued. Hard work came easily to the two protagonists of this book. They undertook innumerable commissions,

ours on pottery did not always emerge from the firing as they were intended; surfaces might not take.

But among these artists' most successful surviving pieces I would single out the generous, plain pottery made by Fry for the Omega, Grant's marquetry "Elephant Tray" and the 1912 embroidered fire-screen (superbly reproduced here in colour). Vanessa Bell's fabric designs for the Omega and Allan Walter, her blue and white dinner service for Charles Clift, and Grant's fireplace in his studio at Charleston. In later years both artists decorated pottery made by Quentin Bell, designed book-jackets and undertook modest private commissions. One of Grant's last was a standing screen for the American poet David Shapiro. Isabelle Ancombe suggests all this activity with economy and an eye for detail. Happily she is not uncritical, but the impression she conveys of the isolation of these artists' decorative work may derive from inadequate analysis of its relation to their easel painting. What imagery is common to both, what ambitions were reserved for one or the other, where does one stop and the other begin? The difficulty in answering the last question is perhaps a measure of Grant and Bell's success.



From the book reviewed here, a dinner service commissioned from Duncan Grant and Vanessa Bell by Kenneth Clark in 1932. Painted on ordinary glazed white Wedgwood plates which were subsequently fired are portrait heads of famous women including an array of queens - Elizabeth I, Victoria, Marie Antoinette and the Queen of Sheba; among the images discernible are portraits of 'Miss 1933', Grete Garbo, 'Mme la Princesse de Metternich' and self-portraits of the artists.

Omega and in Grant and Bell's later decorations.

Many of these, however, have gone. Houses were bombed, rooms ruthlessly white-washed or hastily dismantled by later generations, furniture and painted panels put into attic or eulhouse as 'fashions' changed. The painted panels for the dining-room of Pans-in-the-Reds, where the artists' finest collaboration, admired by Yeats, were rescued by Southampton Art Gallery. Even so, their lack of context considerably diminishes their impact. They were intended not only for a particular setting (oven down to especially constructed lights and reflecting mirrors) but to be seen behind and alongside people talking and eating and moving about. This is the key to the Bloomsbury style. You were not invited to gaze in surprise (as you are with Rex Whistler or some of the surrealist-derived murals of the

their largest schemes being the decoration of Berwick Church and Grant's three panels for the liner Queen Mary. But they rarely refused a friend's plea for a bookplate, a painted pot, or design for a chair cover. Hence the amusement raised by Kenneth Clark's patronizing lines in his autobiography: "In an attempt to revive his [Grant's] interest in decorative art we asked him and Vanessa to paint us a dinner service." Never had the artists been so fully or interestingly employed as when they squeezed in this further commission. Grant maintained that his decorative work was easy to do - it was a different part of himself at work than when he was before on easel. Casualness, spontaneity, a calligraphic abandon ensured a fluent line and quickly achieved results. Of course, it could go wrong. There was sometimes excessive patterning and fluency could become 'ragged'; col-

whom no mention is made was Dr M. J. Rendall who, when he retired from Winchester, restored Butley Priory with excellent judgment, and welcomed undergraduates there on "digs".

But omissions are few, and the survey is very thorough and expert. As in previous volumes, a remarkable collection of photographs is provided, though, presumably not because of the lack of space, it could be found of Little Venham Hall which is "one of the most important 13th century domestic buildings in the country"; perhaps permission to photograph it was withheld. The series, which, it is expected, will run to ten volumes, should help to prevent the destruction, through ignorance, of those smaller, more houses and their like which, as one of the parish churches, are one of the chief riches in the English heritage, and were the chief source of patronage of the arts. As Gibbon noted, "The splendour of the French nobles is confined to their own residences; that of the English is more usefully distributed in their country seats."

Servants of the shari'a

By C. J. Wickham

ANN K. S. LAMBERTON:
State and Government in Medieval Islam
An Introduction to the Study of Islamic Political Theory: The Jurists
382pp. Oxford University Press.
£19.50.
0 19 713600 1

Muslim political theory is one of the three great strands of political philosophy, along with those of the Greeks and the Western Christians. We know less about it, largely because it has had little or no impact on modern Western (ie post-Hobbesian) political thought. We ought to know more, especially today, since a modern state based on Islamic principles owes more to medieval Islamic tradition than a state based on Christian principles ever does to the Gospels. Intelligent commentators, attempting to make sense of difficult and inconsistent material in a legal, ethical, and even (occasionally) politically sensitive way, are always interesting, and the Islamic tradition has produced plenty of these; in the person of Ibn Khaldun, indeed, it produced perhaps the greatest of all ancient or medieval political theorists.

Each of the three traditions is founded on completely different axioms, and it is for this reason, rather than because of the different political histories of their various homelands, that they have remained so wholly distinct, no matter how often they may have borrowed from each other - the fact that Fakhr al-Din, together with Aquinas a few decades later, both assume that man is a political and social animal, does not make either of them Aristotelian except in certain habits of argument. The axioms of the Muslim tradition were, by and large, based on remembered (and falsified) historical experience: for Islam had the good - or bad - luck to have its tenets expressed in a political system within the lifetime of its divinely inspired founder, and all

subsequent political theory has been justified through the many readings of the events of the first forty years of the Hijra, AD 622-61, the years of "Right Rule" before the collapse into historical time with the supposedly wicked Umayyad dynasty. The fact that Mohammed's divine mission was inextricably bound up with state-building left the Muslims not only unhelpfully obsessed with history, but also with political legitimacy - there is much more Muslim political philosophy than in either the Greek or the Christian tradition.

The keys to this legitimacy in mainstream (Sunni) thought, as Ann Lamberton stresses, are divine law, the *shari'a*, based on the Qur'an; the historical traditions of the early years (*sunna*); the consensus of the Islamic community; and (last and least) human reason. These make up a complex system that became more or less frozen in the early ninth century, after which time no lawmaking or politics that diverged from *shari'a* principles, no matter how necessary, was ever legally justifiable - a position that ought to have given rise to instructive political criticism, but in fact did not, for the rejection was too uncompromising.

The purpose of the state was always, in principle, to serve the *shari'a* and act as its means - Muslims had no independent organization to further divine ends, unlike the Christians, who had the Church. The state was made necessary by men's natural aggression; they needed authority to curb them. Islamic political theory concentrated very largely on the nature of this authority and the boundaries inside which it was lawfully active - which meant, for them, the obligations and qualities of the just authority, rather than the limits of its sovereignty and his relationship with the ruled. It was still less concerned with the question of whether authority was actually necessary - for most Muslims, authority was God-given. It was the certainty of this, coupled with the actual political travails of the Islamic community when its leaders (caliphs or, in religious terms, imams) became successively unjust, impotent, chal-

lenged by successful usurpers in cutting areas, and, finally, destroyed by the Mongols in the thirteenth century, which gave the arguments of the theorists their bite: how was order to continue to be legitimate when legal authority, its foundation, was so lacking? Even unjust rulers had to be brought into the system, to allow the whole of the social order to function. Their actions could not be legitimate, but their authority had to be. Al-Ghazali, the best of the traditional juristic theorists, and a man deeply suspicious of all contemporary rulers, expressed it best around the year 1100:

There are these who held that the imamate is dead, lacking as it does the required qualifications. But no substitute can be found for it. What then? Are we to give up obeying the law? Shall we dismiss the *qadis*, declare all authority to be valueless, leaving the population to live in sinfulness? Or shall we continue as we are? We know it is not lawful to lead on a dead animal; still, it would be worse to die of hunger.

The ironies of Muslim political thought lie in the increasingly desperate attempts made by its theorists somehow to sanction the increasingly un-Islamic political systems they lived under, so as to preserve the fundamental moral structures of life. It is no criticism of these theorists to point out that in doing so they became ever more removed from the real political problems which surrounded them (Christians, who only needed to legitimize the Church, found the imperfections of states much less of a difficulty).

Professor Lamberton follows this theme through in profuse detail; it is the most explicit theme in her book, as it is in the texts she analyses. *State and Government* is set out as an introduction to Islamic political theory, or rather to one element in this, the writings of the jurists. Philosophers and administrators are mentioned only in passing. This is unavoidable given the amount of material she has to cover, but it is also

a pity. The fact that two of the most interesting writers, al-Farabi and Ibn Khaldun, came largely from a philosophical tradition, makes one wish for a lot more of that tradition here - perhaps it will come in a later volume. 330-odd pages is a short space in which to cover even one element of Islamic political writing, and much of what Professor Lamberton writes is inevitably sketchy, or based on secondary material, especially her chapters on the early years.

But some things have been left out that should not have been. One, necessary only in that the book is introductory (it includes short accounts of the rise and fall of dynasties), is a fuller treatment of the juristic schools. There were four major schools, established by the year 900 or so, into which nearly all the Sunni theorists fit, but we never properly discover how. As a result, each individual jurist seems to appear on his own, influenced by his predecessors almost by chance; the impression thus created is an exceptionally misleading one, in a body of thought so tied to precise lines of tradition as that of Islam.

More serious is what comes close to being an abatement from commentary. Professor Lamberton's exposition of her twenty-odd writers remains more or less that: exposition. When she shows how al-Farabi and Fakhr al-Din fit Greek thought into the standard Muslim discussion of legitimacy, she contents herself with pointing out the elements they have borrowed; she hardly tries to explain in what ways these procedures alter either the Greek or the Muslim tradition. The Muslim tradition did indeed happily absorb Greek ideas that appear at first sight inimical to it; but it would help us to be shown by what means these were fitted so comfortably into so different a moral world. No Western writer, after all, could properly avoid doing that with Aquinas. Few of the individual chapters have conclusions; nor has the book as a whole.

What Professor Lamberton does give us is a full account of a considerable array of theorists, who are in them-

selves very instructive. The crises of actual history had salutary effects on such writers, particularly in the eighth and ninth centuries (with Ibn al-Muqaffa) and the eleventh (the age of the two major traditional jurists, al-Mawardi and al-Ghazali, and of the most realistic of the Shi'ites, al-Tust). And we can see here how this happened. She gives us a detailed survey of the Shi'ite position, too, though this was less politically preoccupied than that of the Sunnis, as there has been no lawful ruler in history for the Shi'a since AD 661; the Shi'ites were more concerned to legitimate responsible service to illegitimate authority than to legitimate the authority itself, and what they wrote about authority had more to do with eschatology than it did with politics.

Consideration of all these theorists puts in perspective the achievement of Ibn Khaldun, who stood a little apart from the tradition, being as much a philosopher as a jurist, and who was (unlike most of them) politically very active in fourteenth-century North Africa. None the less he can only be understood in the context of the great jurists like al-Ghazali and Fakhr al-Din. Ibn Khaldun took all this, with a small dose of Aristotle, and turned it into something entirely new: the science of historical change. History proceeded by means of laws of development based on latent social processes and even economic requirements, which he set out with a complexity unequalled before Marx, in a cyclical pattern of rise and decline, watched by a circular contraposition of centre (city) and periphery (desert) that still exercises its spell on modern political theorists, notably Ernest Gellner. Even the early caliphs and the Umayyads fit into this scheme, and Ibn Khaldun's science thus goes so far as to revalue - by making inevitable - Mu'awiya's revolt in 661 against 'Ali, *Nasir-shari'a* law, too, is partially authorized if it is based on reason. But it cannot, in the end, succeed as well as the *shari'a*, indeed, even economic works better by Islamic law. God moves the world through the *shari'a* as much for Ibn Khaldun as for any of his predecessors, and in this book we see how.

Ideals of holiness

By Alexander Kazhdan

GERGE HACKEL (Editor):
The Byzantine Saint
255pp. Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius, 12 Ladbroke Grove, London W11 2PB. £6.50 post free.
0 7044 0451 6

Every society creates its own ideal of holiness, and the ideal of medieval and particularly of Byzantine society was embodied in the figure of the saint. The University of Birmingham's Fourteenth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies was devoted to the concept of sanctity, and its major contribution was to inaugurate and develop two interrelated approaches to the subject: the social function of the Byzantine holy man and the evolution through time of the concept of holiness.

The trend towards a social approach is mirrored by the fact that no less than five of the contributors begin with a reference to Peter Brown's articles, especially to "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity" published in 1971, which is a sixth author, E. Patlagean, the fully called "l'étude classique". But what properly is the social approach? The series, which, it is expected, will run to ten volumes, should help to prevent the destruction, through ignorance, of those smaller, more houses and their like which, as one of the parish churches, are one of the chief riches in the English heritage, and were the chief source of patronage of the arts. As Gibbon noted, "The splendour of the French nobles is confined to their own residences; that of the English is more usefully distributed in their country seats."

lately humble people, whereas Patlagean emphasizes the connections of saints with the upper layer of society. The contradiction is not so striking as it seems at first sight: Browning has based his observations primarily on early lives (Symeon the Younger, Theodore of Sykeon), while Patlagean uses lives from the ninth to the eleventh centuries and stresses their difference from earlier hagiographies. "The popular saint" says Browning, "appears as the direct heir of the ideal citizen of classical antiquity." In P. Magdaleno's paper we find, similarly, that the holy man, acting "in his paradoxical, anti-social way... provided a release from the tensions of too much civilization". In other words, the holy man of late antiquity was conceived as the negation of an ancient ideal so that the figure of the holy fool became, significantly, popular.

By the eleventh century, however, as L. Ryden demonstrates, the attitude towards those who "feign that they are fools" had changed: they were regarded as dangerous hypocrites. In this connection we may recall the Life of St Philaretus, the "foolly" whose behaviour was significantly softened and limited to his self-damaging "anti-thrift". In the earlier period the behaviour of the holy fool was full of sexual curiosity, of a constant play with fornication and indecency, and it is an accident that a parallel figure, that of a former harlot, should also draw the attention of early hagiographers. But by the twelfth century the saint had become St Eudocimus was a general, St Mary the Younger an ideal housewife; the scene shifted away from the desert or the open square to monasteries and the inner chambers of noble houses.

An especially surprising change occurs during the Comnenian period

(the twelfth century) and a brilliant study by Magdaleno makes it clear that at this time intellectuals fought against the traditional ideal of holiness, and overbearing sanctity was submerged beneath the surface of an elitist culture. Two additional observations could be provided in support of this theory: first, there is evidence that the ruling clergy tried to suppress popular hagiography; the Patriarch Nicholas (1147-51) ordered the Life of St Paraskeve composed by a peasant in the vulgar language to be burnt; and second, the military and chivalric ideal of behaviour was eulogized by poets and historians. When, after a long period of stagnation, during the Comnenian and Nicaean periods, hagiography re-

vived, the holy man acquired a new and strictly political garb, representing (as R. Macrides shows) the civil and ecclesiastical hierarchy as symbols of anti-Palaeologan resistance.

Although Byzantine sainthood originated, in a sense, as a negation of ancient moral ideals, the cult of saints as S. Vryonis emphasizes, retained many pagan traits. Early Church Fathers such as John Chrysostom or Asterius attacked the pagan aspects of the panegyric, a local religious festival connected with the celebration of saints - though later, Byzantine society came to terms with this semi-pagan practice and incorporated it into its rituals.

One section of the book under

Fifty years on...

The TLS of April 28, 1932 carried the following review by Pile Gordon of *The Official History of the Gallipoli Campaign, Volume 2, by Brigadier-General C. F. Aspinall-Oglander*:

The vacillation of the Government before it could come to its decision to order the evacuation of the Peninsula is well described. The Government's task was complicated by contradictory reports as to the possibility of a further advance by land or sea, of the sinking moral of the enemy and of the increase in quantity and quality of his ammunition supply, by political considerations, by the wishes of Allies, by fears as to the possible effect of a withdrawal on prestige, on Moslem opinion in India, or as to the capacity of British sea-power to keep open communications with the troops in Gallipoli in the face of winter storms and hostile submarines. When it did decide the season was in the opinion of many

already too far advanced to make evacuation possible except to the form of an ignominious and almost annihilating disaster.

In these pages the survivors from the Peninsula will almost live through their campaign again. The heat, the flies and the malarial fever which they brought; the lack of water; which had to be so wearily carried up the steep hills... often only to be wasted at the top where stragglers sat on their parapets and looked at each other during the unofficial truce enforced by the November blizzard which killed 200 men and afflicted 5,000 with frost-bite among the British alone. They will find comfort in the way in which their privations have been noted, their triumphs recorded, and their failure as it seemed at the time, mitigated by the bearing assurance that their hard work in Gallipoli prepared the way for the final victory after the Peace in Palestine.

enemy might do in using our beaches as a target our guns were rationed to two rounds a day apiece; all will come back to them, as will all memories of short leave to Kephale or fly-blown Mudros, with the wind blowing filth of inflated entrails from the French slaughter-house across the harbour. Then there was the bitter weather towards the end, when the War was frozen into immobility and the munitions of Hell were set on their parapets and looked at each other during the unofficial truce enforced by the November blizzard which killed 200 men and afflicted 5,000 with frost-bite among the British alone. They will find comfort in the way in which their privations have been noted, their triumphs recorded, and their failure as it seemed at the time, mitigated by the bearing assurance that their hard work in Gallipoli prepared the way for the final victory after the Peace in Palestine.

Easterners' seats

By John Buxton

JOHN KENWORTHY-BROWNE:
PETER REID, MICHAEL SAYER,
DAVID WATKIN:
Burke's and Savills Guide to Country Houses
Volume 3: East Anglia
280pp. Burke's Peetrage, £25.
0 85011 000 0

The "East Anglia" of this third volume in Burke's and Savills valuable dictionary of English country houses includes Cambridgeshire as well as Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex; and the new county boundaries are quite properly ignored. (Has my recent piece of legislation been less well-considered, or put more needless obstacles in the way of historical research than the ludicrous reshuffling of counties in 1974? No one except a bureaucrat will ever think of Badminton House as anywhere but in Gloucestershire - that

"four-letter county" of Avon invites no loyalty. Here Cambridgeshire has not been allowed to annex Burghley House.) The counties and the houses within them are listed alphabetically by the name of the house, not of its village. Frontalms; now sink beneath a reservoir; is so listed, not under Hanningfield; and Clifford's Hall must not be sought at Stoke-by-Nayland. Nearly a thousand houses are here described, and it is a measure of the wealth of Norfolk that almost half the book is taken up by this county, described by Michael Sayer of Sparham House.

In his excellent introduction to the Norfolk gazetteer Mr Sayer observes that the county is "a large and fertile agricultural county... largely unaffected by industrialization"; it has therefore retained more of its character, and many more of its houses, than Essex, which has been so heavily infected by the proximity of London. The distance of Norfolk from London has also, as always, meant that many noble families have retained their ancestral estates of 120

family estates remaining - there were nearly twice as many in 1900 - one is six is still held by the family which held it 300 years ago; in Essex there are only two such.

The special characteristics of this series lies in the brief records given of the families who built, altered, restored and lived in these houses - in the treatment of houses as buildings not only of aesthetic but also of historic interest. Houses are built to be lived in and used, not to be converted into immaculate preserved museums, with druggist over the carpets and cords across the

enter a house where a flower-basket and a pair of secateurs, a cap or two on a settle, and a couple of fishing rods leaning against the wall greet one. For it concerns us to know who lives or lived here, what sort of a family they were: a prime minister at Houghton; a Dutch merchant at Hovingham; Townshende of the turnips at Raynham; Rider Haggard at Ditchingham; Edward Fitzgerald at Hodge Hall, a historian at Belsay.

brigg, lawyers, politicians and, above all, farmers. Literary associations are few, though P. C. Woodhouse's family was of Kimberley Hall, and Dickens took Rols Park (now demolished) as the model for the Warren in *Barnaby Rudge*; Jane Serpente, for whom Skelton wrote *Phyllis Sparrow*, was at Carrow Abbey, but as a novice, and so she gets no mention. And surprisingly in a series which records and often illustrates houses that have gone, there is no reference to Little Saxham, Sir John Crofts' house, which Thomas Gainsborough celebrated in a well-known poem.

An additional advantage of the concern with the inhabitants of these houses is that it allows bountiful to come in. Among the "owners of chocolate-guzzling racehorse owners of Easton" is "the ample Hon. Dorothy Paget", Lady Warwick of Easton. "The chief source of patronage of the arts. As Gibbon noted, 'The splendour of the French nobles is confined to their own residences; that of the English is more usefully distributed in their country seats.'"

whom no mention is made was Dr M. J. Rendall who, when he retired from Winchester, restored Butley Priory with excellent judgment, and welcomed undergraduates there on "digs".

But omissions are few, and the survey is very thorough and expert. As in previous volumes, a remarkable collection of photographs is provided, though, presumably not because of the lack of space, it could be found of Little Venham Hall which is "one of the most important 13th century domestic buildings in the country"; perhaps permission to photograph it was withheld. The series, which, it is expected, will run to ten volumes, should help to prevent the destruction, through ignorance, of those smaller, more houses and their like which, as one of the parish churches, are one of the chief riches in the English heritage, and were the chief source of patronage of the arts. As Gibbon noted, "The splendour of the French nobles is confined to their own residences; that of the English is more usefully distributed in their country seats."